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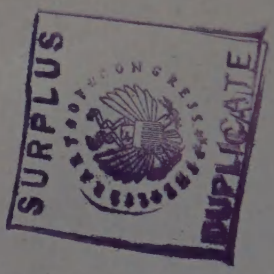

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION.

A

SERMON,

BY THE

REV. MARMADUKE PRICKETT, M.A. F.S.A.

LATE CHAPLAIN OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

BRIDLINGTON:

PRINTED BY JOHN FURBY.

1838.

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TO

JOHN GREAME, ESQUIRE,

AND

THE REST OF THE SUBSCRIBERS

TO THE

BRIDLINGTON NATIONAL SCHOOL,

THIS SERMON

IS INSCRIBED BY

THEIR

FAITHFUL SERVANT IN CHRIST,

THE AUTHOR.

L.C. 3-1-58

By Transfer
NOV 16 1925

When I had prepared the following Sermon, I was prevented from preaching it by sudden and severe indisposition. An old College Friend, the Rev. JOHN SCOTT, M. A., Vicar of St. Mary's, Hull, kindly undertook, at short notice, to supply my place in the Pulpit. But considering this Sermon as in some degree the property of the Subscribers to our National School, on whose behalf it was written, I have ventured to print it for private circulation among them. I beg them to accept it as a testimony of my anxious desire to support the National School established in my native place, and as a proof of my firm attachment to the System of Education there pursued.

Bridlington, August 27th, 1838.

A

SERMON,

&c.

PROVERBS, XIX, 2.

That the soul be without knowledge, it is not good.

To declare this great truth, Christian Brethren, a thousand years before the Birth of Christ might require the sagacity of Solomon, the wisest of men, and an inspired writer too, but it is a truth which in the present day nearly two thousand years after the Birth of Christ, few people seem disposed to question. We might almost persuade ourselves that the period foretold by the inspired Prophet had arrived, when "many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased."

I shall not therefore take up your time by attempting to shew the inestimable value of knowledge, but my object on the present occasion will be to point out as well as I am able the different species of knowledge, and then to shew in what manner knowledge may be most advantageously diffused.

Knowledge, I mean, as opposed to ignorance, knowledge of all kinds; for there is no kind of knowledge which is not more or less useful,

and which may not be turned to some good account.

First, there is the knowledge of God, as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. This is what we call Christian Knowledge; because it is the knowledge of God as revealed to us in Christ.

In the pursuit of Christian Knowledge we come to learn that there is Hell to be escaped from, as well as Heaven to be won—that condemnation as well as salvation is set before us sinners—that as the learned Chillingworth most forcibly expresses it—"if we shine not beautifully as the stars of God's glory—we shall glare fearfully as the firebrands of his wrath for ever."

Then again, with respect to ourselves we learn that our moral condition is that of imperfect, not of perfect creatures—that we are not now like the angels, who kept their first estate, but rather, while unredeemed, akin to those fallen spirits "who are reserved" as the Apostle tells us, "in chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

And when we have thus come to know that this is our sad estate by reason that our first parents sinned, and thereby lost the image of God wherein they were originally created, then may we go on to know that the Paradise which was thus lost in Adam, has been regained in Christ. "That as in Adam all die, even so," saith the Scripture, "in Christ shall

all be made alive," And so much with respect to Christian Knowledge.

And when we have thus studied the mysterious volume of revelation—then there are the wonders of creation open before our eyes, and we shall do well to contemplate and admire. The material world is full of manifestations of the power and wisdom of God. "For" says the Apostle, "the invisible things of God, even his eternal power and godhead, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made"—and natural philosophy in all its branches is therefore most truly divine, for it is the study of the work of God, which he wrought in the beginning, when he created the heavens and the earth.

Nor can any pursuit be conceived better calculated to fill us with gratitude to God, than the pursuit of those paths of science which in modern times have led to such new and marvellous discoveries. The vast circle of the Sciences presents to the inquiring mind occupation of the most rational and delightful kind. In short when science holds her proper station as the handmaid of religion, she cannot be courted with too much homage and respect.

And further there is the knowledge of the Arts which combine to make life comfortable, and whereby man has rendered the good gifts of his Creator subservient to the several necessities of his existence here.

And lastly there is the knowledge of the past History of mankind, the History of the Church, and of the world—the record of human experience—the register of our virtues and our crimes. And thus much may serve as a brief outline of the various kinds of knowledge which it is good for the soul of man to possess.

Come we now to consider the best means of diffusing knowledge—and this brings us to the grand question of education, a question which in this country seems every day to be assuming additional importance, and to be engrossing a larger share of public attention.

It is no longer doubtful whether the mass of our population is to be educated at all, but rather *how* the people are to be educated, and *who* are to be their teachers.

And first, How are the people of this or any other country in the world to be educated? We answer according to the necessities of their condition as beings accountable to God, and destined to live in another state of existence, happy or miserable, for ever after death. Then further, the education given ought to be suitable to their rank in life, and the opportunities of leisure for study, which that rank affords. And as we have every reason to believe that the order of human society is established by God—so we believe it to be a safe guide in our endeavours to ascertain that quantity of knowledge which is necessary for men in various ranks of life. We can no more admit

that an equal quantity of knowledge is necessary or attainable by every individual, than that every man has a claim to an equal share of riches or power. God has not willed an equal distribution of these blessings among mankind—any more than of knowledge. And this very inequality of worldly condition is, generally speaking, a formidable barrier to the universal diffusion of knowledge. And although in all classes of society individuals have been found, who, from the possession of extraordinary abilities, have been enabled to overcome difficulties in the pursuit of knowledge, which would have been insurmountable to men of ordinary minds—yet the successful pursuit of knowledge under difficulties in some remarkable instances is no contradiction to our statement, but rather it is the very exception which proves the rule.

Nothing therefore, as we believe, can be worse than to over-educate a man—to give him knowledge uncalled for by that station of life in which the providence of God has placed him. In fact he can hardly acquire such a superfluity of knowledge, but at an expense of time which ought to be otherwise employed, and consequently it is ten to one but such a man will neglect the proper duties of his station. These daily duties in most cases call for so large a devotion of time and thoughts, as to leave the generality of mankind a very small share of learned leisure. We conclude therefore

that in providing for the education of the different classes of society, we should estimate carefully the relative importance of different kinds of knowledge to each particular class—this relative importance being measured by their respective need and opportunities of learning.

And refering for a moment to the commencement of this discourse, we shall find that the importance of Christian Knowledge will come first under our notice. "Bring them up" says the inspired Apostle to all Christian parents of children, "Bring them up, in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

The propogation of the Gospel—the publication of those glad tidings of salvation to fallen man, this is the most indispensable business of all, for we have divine authority to say so. If a man were to gain the whole world—all the knowledge—all the riches—and all the honours of it—and to lose his immortal soul—which is to lose salvation by Christ—then we may well ask with our blessed Saviour, what is he profited—what indeed! Therefore whatever other knowledge be diffused in the world, it can do but little good—if it be unaccompanied with the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. Nay more, other knowledge, as Lord Bacon tells us, without "the corrective spice of religion"—may serve to little purpose, save to puff up our unstable minds with false notions of our own importance in

the scale of created beings—and thus tend to weaken instead of stregthening our entire dependence upon God.

Therefore, Christian Brethren, let the foundation of all knowledge be deeply laid in the knowledge God our Redeemer—and in the next place let us seek to know ourselves as sinners who need redempton—and then if we please we may go on to build upon this sure foundation a goodly superstructure of all other knowledge, suitable and necessary for the rank and station in life, to which the providence of God has seseverally called us. And, let me ask, is it, can it be good for any soul amongst us to be without such knowledge as this? You well know that it cannot. Looking as we do upon this mortal life as a state of trial and probation for that immortal life which is to come—we must all know and believe that whatever else we be ignorant of, we must not be ignorant of God—sensible too that as sinners in the sight of God, we need an atonement for sin—we must know and believe that whatever else we be ignorant of, we must not be ignorant of redemption by Jesus Christ. For how otherwise, shall we meet death with peaceful resignation—how otherwise can we entertain a good hope of a joyful resurrection—how otherwise shall we stand before the judgment seat of Christ—if in the Judge we do not recognize our beloved Saviour—Him, who once died upon the Cross for our sins, and

rose again for our justification, and ever liveth to make intercession for us at the right hand of *his*, and through him of *our* Heavenly Father and our God.

Yes, Christian Brethren, you will I doubt not readily agree with me, that we must all first know these most necessary truths—necessary these primary elements of knowledge are for all men in all conditions—and therefore it is that this knowledge is so revealed in the blessed word of God, that all mankind may attain it, from the least even unto the greatest. All to whom the Gospel has been made known—among whom the Holy Bible has been circulated—they may all know the Lord who has created and redeemed them—high and low—rich and poor—one with another—and in that most blessed and universal knowledge both of God and of themselves, all mankind may find rest, eternal rest unto their souls. So much with respect to the necessity of Christian knowledge, as the groundwork of popular education.

And with respect to other kinds of knowledge, when we examine the course of instruction pursued in our Universities and Grammar Schools, we shall see how much sound learning is there communicated along with the principles of Christianity.

But to come more directly to the question before us—How is the National system of education for the children of the Poor conducted

in our land? In the Parochial School, for which I am this day to solicit your annual charity, we have an example which will serve as a specimen of the system. And here let me remark, that it is of the system of education pursued in our National Schools which I wish to speak, and not of the working of the system in this particular school. It is enough for my present argument to shew what the National School Society's system really is, and what it is capable of effecting when rightly administered.

And first, we have a pledge in the very name and title of these schools, that religion is not neglected there. They are schools for the education of the Poor in the principles of the Church of England. Nor is this title to be explained as if the education of the poor given in these schools were exclusively religious. By no means—but we are to understand that whatever knowledge is communicated will be in subordination to religion—and further, that this religion will be Christianity according to the use of the National Church, and under the superintendence of the National Clergy. And thus we have something like a guarantee for the sort of religious training given in our Schools. We have proceeded in fact to the second of the two questions which we proposed to consider—namely, *how* are the people of this country to be educated—and *who* are to be their teachers.

That it is the duty of every Christian parent to bring up his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord will not be disputed. That duty rests upon divine authority. That it is the duty of every Christian householder to accustom his servants as well as his children to the strict observance of the sabbath day, and of the religious duties of every day in the week, is also clear from the injunctions of Holy Scripture. That it is therefore the duty of every Christian government to make provision for the religious instruction of the people seems to be a necessary inference, nor are scriptural examples wanting to confirm this conclusion. Upon this principle we affirm that the state is bound to maintain the National Church, and is justified in selecting that form of Religion which appears to be best adapted to promote the truth of God. And this machinery for National religious instruction includes, of necessity, a sufficient supply of Clergy, Churches, and Schools. Without these instruments of good, it is impossible that such an education as we have been recommending, can be communicated to the people. Our National Schools and our National Church are inseparably connected, and they must stand or fall together. This is not the place to enter into controversy, nor do I profess myself competent to deal with the difficulties that embarrass the question of National Education, owing to the religious

dissensions that unhappily prevail amongst us. But I speak the sentiments of every consistent Minister and Member of the Church of England, when I say that the interests of true religion must not be sacrificed to the interests of political expediency, nor even peace obtained at the expence of truth. We love peace much, but we love truth more. The Apostolic Rule is "first pure, then peaceable." Let us beware, Christian Brethren, let us beware of complimenting religious indifference with the fair names of charity and liberality, while honest and inflexible faith in God is misrepresented under the names of sectarian bigotry and ignorant prejudice. And, believe me, such misrepresentations of truth have been common in all ages of the Church, and are not uncommon now. Neither let us compromise our honest convictions, much less our conscientious differences of opinion, on so momentous a subject as religion, for the sake of a seeming union of parties, a hollow truce which will soon be broken. Bad as the consequences of our religious disputes may be, the evil consquences of our indifference to the peculiarities of the Gospel would be far greater. And if some amiable philanthropist, or speculative philosopher, willing to try his skill in the cure of our national distempers, offers to our notice some plausible scheme for the amalgamation of all sects and all opinions —we shall be little inclined to adopt his

recommendations, but shall tell him plainly that the remedy is worse than the disease.

But I gladly turn to the more grateful task of urging the claims of the Charitable Institution, for which I plead, upon your benevolence.

The education professed to be furnished in our National School, is strictly Christian education, and this must be its best recommendation to a Christian congregation. By the system adopted in this School, knowledge is not communicated without religion. Power is given, and at the same time directions how to use it aright. For knowledge is power. But as power improperly exercised is tyranny —riches wastefully squandered profit not the possessor—so knowledge without religion is unsafe. It is like the ship without the rudder—the watch without the main-spring. What is a clever man without a due sense of responsibility to God—without moral principle? We do not desire to make the children of our Schools clever men of this description—we do not wish to cultivate the intellect, and to leave the heart unimproved by the use of the divinely appointed means of grace. The word of God must be read and explained to the children in our Schools—the minister of God must catechise our children according to primitive and apostolic usage—the sacraments of God must be duly administered among the children entrusted to our care—they must be

assembled in the house of God—and thus prepared for the kingdom of God. We would educate them, Christian Brethren, for time, and we would educate them for eternity,—and we would pray that they and we may "so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things which are eternal." Such is the aim of the system of education pursued in our School. Need I add, that if duly administered in childhood and carried out in riper years its beneficial effects must be evident in the lives of persons so instructed. Need I tell you what a blessing to every parish such a school as this must prove.

And here, Christian Brethren, I might close these remarks by commending this charitable institution to your accustomed benevolence. But I pause for a moment to improve the occasion to purposes of more general exhortation. Our National School is truly one of the most important means of the moral amelioration of this Parish. But there are other means equally important, and equally conducive to the same end. The extension of Church accommodation—the maintenance of our Clergy, so as to secure efficient pastoral superintendence for our population—the support of Religious Societies for the circulation of the Scriptures among the poor, and the propagation of the Gospel in foreign lands. All these sacred duties, not to mention the relief of the temporal wants of our poorer

Brethren in Christ, press upon us as Christians, and for the performance or neglect of these duties according to our several ability we are responsible to God. Let them be viewed as the necessary fruits of a lively faith—as unerring evidences of our religious character—as a testimony the only sure testimony of our love to Christ. Hear his own words: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*" What a motive for us to abound in works of piety and charity!

And as these various ways and means of doing good after the example of our blessed Lord ought to be viewed as parts of one common obligation laid upon us, so ought we to be influenced in the discharge of all our relative duties by motives which belong to us in common. We are fellow Christians, and we are fellow members of the Church of England. Therefore we are partakers in common of the Holy Sacrament of Baptism; and we are all bound to fulfil that most solemn Baptismal Vow. Therefore also ought we to have been partakers in common of that other Holy Sacrament—the sacrament of the Lord's most precious Body and Blood. Further, we have a divinely commissioned Ministry—the free use of our Bibles—a scriptural Liturgy. In short we enjoy in common all the appointed means of grace, which Christ and his Apostles committed to the Church. We are also sinners in common—

* Matthew, xxv, 40.

and we have in common a Saviour from sin. Christian Brethren, can we want stronger ties to bind us to the exercise of mutual charity on earth—and when we come to meet in heaven as redeemed saints, shall we then want common subjects of thanksgiving? Not if there be truth in the word of God. Our earthly and our heavenly praises shall be alike. What did the Apostle John hear when "a door was opened to him in heaven?" There they fell down before the Lamb of God saying "Worthy is the Lamb"—"for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation."[1] And again, "After this I beheld and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."[2] Shadows these of good things to come, Christian Brethren, emblems of unseen realities—but substantially true. The pains of Hell, and the joys of Heaven are alike inconceivable. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that hate him, any more than for them that love him."[3] "Now we know in part"[1]—but it is certain

[1] Rev. v, 8.9.12. [2] Rev. vii, 9.10. [3] Isaiah lxiv, 4. I Cor. ii 9.

that we shall hereafter know entirely. And if such be the shadows of good or evil that lie before us, what must be the realities of those everlasting things?

Knowing therefore, Christian Brethren, the terrors as well as the mercies of the Lord, we would persuade you to the active discharge of every christian duty. Seek, we beseech you, his enabling grace, and in the strength of that grace go forward, and surely "out of weakness you shall be made strong."[2] Shrink not from exertion in the cause of Christ, but see what can be done for his sake in your families, in your parish, and in the world at large. "In all your doings acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths."[3] Have you learning? consecrate it to his service, for there is "no wisdom or counsel against the Lord."[4] Have you power? use it for his glory, for "by him kings reign."[5] Have you wealth? cast it into his sanctuary, for "the silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of Hosts."[6]

Christian Brethren, you are this day called upon to give proof of the existence of Christian motives in your hearts, nor is it necessary that I should urge you to any extraordinary display of liberality on behalf of our Parochial School. Rather would I entreat that you will not contribute less than you have done on former occasions, and that the voice of a friend on this anniversary may not be less persuasive than the voice of strangers.

I Cor. xiii, 12. Hebr. xi, 34. Prov. xxi, 30.
Prov. iii, 6. Prov. viii, 15. Haggai, ii, 8.

HYMN.

To God, the Father, yield
Immortal praise and love,
For all our comforts here,
And all our hopes above.
He sent his own eternal Son,
To die for sins which man had done.

To God, th' eternal Son,
Let praise immortal flow,
Who bought us with his blood,
Who saves from endless woe.
And now on high he lives and reigns
And sees the fruit of all his pains.

To God, the Holy Ghost,
Immortal praises give,
Whose new-creating power
Can make dead sinners live.
His work completes the scheme divine
And makes our souls with light to shine.

Immortal praise to Thee,
O Father, Spirit, Son,
The undivided Three,
The great mysterious One,
With all her powers where human reason fails,
There love to Christ adores, and faith in God prevails.

J. Furby, Printer, Bridlington.

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A

DISSECTION OF THE QUERIES

ON THE AMOUNT OF

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND EDUCATION,

CIRCULATED BY

LORD JOHN RUSSELL,

THROUGH THE

POOR LAW COMMISSIONERS.

ADDRESSED TO

35,826

SIR R. H. INGLIS, BART., M.P.

BY A

CLERGYMAN OF SOUTH WILTS.

SALISBURY:

PRINTED FOR HEARN AND WHITMARSH,

CATHERINE-STREET AND WINCHESTER-STREET;

AND MESSRS. RIVINGTON, LONDON.

1838.

SALISBURY:
PRINTED BY JOHN B. TAYLOR,
HERALD OFFICE.

TO

SIR R. H. INGLIS, BART. M.P.

SIR:

I HAVE the honour of being one of your constituents; and I beg leave to add, that I esteem it a singular honour and privilege to enjoy in you so near an approach to one's ideal of a Churchman's representative. For these are days in which it is not always easy to have any voice in the representation, much less to send up the man entirely to one's choice. The Reform Bill has disfranchised no inconsiderable portion of the wisdom, the virtue, and the religion, of this country; and has thus, to use the term of the popular theory, deprived it of political existence. These good qualities are almost as much dependent on a representative for their rightful weight in the realm, as Horace says the deeds of heroes are on a poet for their due meed of celebrity; and I think the boon is, in both cases, equally casual and rare. Therefore many of the best of the land, especially they who are buried in the cities and boroughs—deep sunk in those bogs

and marshes of the constituency—many "οἱ μεγάλοι καὶ καρτεροὶ ἢ σοφοὶ ἄνδρες are now, as far as political life is concerned, sleeping a very long sleep

"illacrimabiles
Urguentur ignotique longa
Nocte, carent quia vate sacro."

Lest my words should seem to imply an opinion that any thing is still wanting in your Parliamentary character, I will at once confess that the standard referred to, is, under present circumstances, entirely abstract; so much so, that I think it admits of a question, whether the Church ought, in these days of rebuke and blasphemy, to send any representatives to Parliament at all. Can she now continue to do so, and still retain that peculiar blessing, with which the Book of Psalms commences? If she sends any to that unecclesiastical assembly, should it not be rather the prophet to testify and to warn, than the councillor to sit amongst them and to advise? Often and often, however, when the hearts of churchmen have sunk within them, and they have well nigh cast away their last vestige of confidence in political men; when they have seen their more pretending leaders complacently accept defeats in weighty principles, for the bribe of a personal triumph or two in details; then they have rejoiced again to see offered by you a clear and forcible testimony, not warped by party aims, or clouded by compromise or sophisticated by the temper and theories of the day.

We may, therefore, confidently hope that you will never surrender that truth, which Acts of

Parliament, though they may disregard, can never make untrue, that the Church, and the Church alone, has been divinely commissioned with the office of feeding the little ones of Christ's flock: nor ever consent to any plan of education which shall straighten or hamper the free discharge of this commission. In this hope I venture to entreat your attention to the following Queries, which were brought to me, in a tabular form, about a month since, by the Relieving Officer of my union, with the request that I would fill it up as far as the Church was concerned :—

——— *Parish.*

Return of the Amount of Religious Instruction and Education.

1. The number and names of the Churches and Chapels; and the capacity of each, with the authority. E. g.

1. St. Philip ..... 1130 ..... Mr. Bell, Rector

1. Trinity Chapel 750 ..... Mr. Leonard, Curate

2. The number of Dissenting places of worship, with the denomination and capacity of each, and the authorities. E. g.

1. Independent ... 800 ..... Mr. Abel, Minister

1. Baptist ..... 500 ..... Mr. Golby, Deacon

3. The number of Sunday Schools, and of Day Schools connected with

(I.) The National School Society

(II.) The British and Foreign School Society

(III.) Any other Religious Denomination

4. The number of children under each of these three heads receiving instruction

(1.) In a Day School only

(2.) In a Sunday School only

(3.) In both Sunday and Day Schools

with the authority in each case. E. g. Mr. Archer, schoolmaster.

5. The estimated population in 1838, and the supposed annual rate of increase.

6. The supposed proportion of persons who cannot read or write. E. g. 23 per cent.

In order to prove that I do not remark upon it in a captious spirit, I will premise that I had fully made up my mind to answer the questions as well as I could, according to the intention of the framer of them; that I have, when asked, advised other clergymen to do so; and that I have actually tried for several hours to draw up true and fair answers. But the only conclusion I have arrived at, is, that I never saw questions of such clumsy construction, and capable of such unfair results. I must pronounce it impossible to ascertain on what principle they ought to be answered; and at the same time possible to answer them so as to favour one's own views to any intent one might desire. A scrupulous answerer will be certain not to do justice to the members of his own cause, while a man with an elastic conscience will as certainly do the contrary—and I leave others to judge which of the two, Churchmen or Dissenters, will gain most by this perplexity.

The only parallel I can find for them is, the peculiar mode of questioning adopted towards our Saviour by His enemies, of which the Evangelists have recorded many examples, very ingenious but baffled at once by the simplicity of Divine Wisdom. I do not by this comparison mean to insinuate that the *animus* is the same in both cases; and, on the other hand, I would not be certain that the awkwardness of these questions is entirely undesigned: clumsy questions, however intended, produce generally the same effect as sophistry; and sophistical questions always *seem* clumsy.

The chief clumsiness, i.e. the chief loop-hole for unfair statements in this strange document, is the specification of the three, and only three, classes, under which the respondent is allowed to range the schools of his parish; (1) "National Society," (2) "British and Foreign School Society," (3) "Any other Religious Denominations." Now this reminds me of a well-known passage in Herodotus, in which he speaks of "men and other cattle;" with respect to which the student is generally requested to observe that this is only a Greek idiom, and does not imply that the father of history considered men to be a kind of cattle: nor, I will add, are School Societies religious denominations. Our enquirer, whoever he is, after specifying two classes, instead of leaving us a spacious "&c.," in which we might enumerate the various forms of education which the multiform state of society in England happily produces, unexpectedly cramps up this open space into the "other denominations;" as if these blessed denominations comprehended all the freedom of will or originality of method to be found in all England. We must either belong to the National School Society, or to the British and Foreign School Society, or be immediately plunged into the dark and drear abyss of all the other religious denominations. What can shew more the gross unfairness of this form of examination than the simple fact that it utterly excludes all that are Church, and nothing but Church, schools?

Many clergymen very naturally do not like to have their free judgment, for the exercise of which, in spiritual things, they need answer to none but their spiritual rulers, fettered by the regulations of any self-constituted society; and would rather choose for themselves their books and methods of instruction, unless want of resources compels them to sell their freedom. For example, in my own little parish, a pious churchman of the last century, "devoted to God" a small annual sum sufficient for the maintenance of a village school, wherein children should be taught, at least, to read the bible, and repeat the Church Catechism. He also vested the management of the school in the clergyman, churchwarden, and clerk, for the time being. This, is, therefore, a Church of England school, though totally unconnected with the National School Society: yet I can find no place for it in the classification lying before me. For observe, I do not find fault with these people for calling their omnium gatherum societies religious denominations, i.e. for putting their own things into what class they please; but for so dividing things in general, as to leave no place for my own particular school *in rerum natura*. They do not merely say with Dr. Kitchener, "Of all the birds of the air, commend me to a shin-bone of beef;" but dictating the terms of my answer to their Queries they compel me to say, "This is neither fish, flesh, fowl, nor yet good red herring," as if their "good red herring" comprehended the whole residue of crea-

tion. I repeat that there is no place for simply Church Schools in this scheme of questions; and if they are inserted in what seems the most inclusive, and, therefore, the fittest class, they will probably go to swell the ranks of the enemy.

Another happy perplexity in this document, is the *rank* of schools intended. In this country there are infinite gradations between an Infant School and a University—and there are also infinite varieties in the source and channel of payment for education between the case of an orphan in a workhouse, and a gentleman commoner at Christchurch. Some are taught gratuitously by their friends or by public subscription; some possess a freehold right to a little education, which is as much their own, as the acres, on which it is charged, are the property of the wealthy landowner; some pay three pence a-week for just so much worth of learning, and have none to thank but God and His Church; some pay six pence or a shilling a-week for a corresponding amount of writing or arithmetic; and some, for a little more, are taught mensuration, and read the English history, and so on, till we come to those dubious confines of liberal education, the Yorkshire schools, which are at the present moment suffering much undeserved calumny. Now I am in the perplexity I describe: some of the children of small tradesmen, and others in my parish, pay a shilling or eighteen pence a-week for a better sort of instruction; and their parents would consider that

they have no more right to be swamped in parliamentary returns, to be "numbered but not named," than so many lords and ladies sending their eldest sons the grand tour with fashionable private tutors. One or two also go to boarding-schools. Where then am I to draw the line? Some of Lord John Russell's informants will draw no line at all, and throw every living being, high or low, that can by any construction be considered *in statu pupillari*, into the Return; and as none above a certain rank are beholden to either of the two societies mentioned, they will, of course, all fall to that grand residuary legetee "all other denominations." The Dissenters will then claim this latter class to themselves; and, as they have already had their turn under the head of British and Foreign School Society, it is easy to see they will come off with the lion's share in the spoil.

There are several other considerations that make it difficult to answer according to the mind of the questioner, and easy to answer according to one's own wishes or prejudices; and which therefore shew that the return will be good for nothing. Take a common village. What is to be considered a school? In my parish about this time of the year there is always a night-school formed for labouring boys of all ages, between six and eight o'clock; which of course, from the casualties attending agricultural employments, is not very uniformly attended; and is hardly systematized into a school till Spring

dissolves it. Is this a school? The master is a churchman, but does not give the boys religious instruction otherwise than by hearing them read the Bible. Does it then belong to the other denominations? If a clergyman or his wife has a small class, once or twice a week, or may be, every evening, is that a school? and if so, what society or denomination does it belong to? I know of a parsonage, of which almost every room has been converted into a school on Sundays, and even on week days; the rector and his wife, their daughters, and four of their servants, taking their respective classes. But what clergyman would like to make a Parliamentary Return of such domestic arrangements? What is to be done then with dame schools, the most natural and longest established of all? Are they generally too small and too informal to be accounted schools—mere nameless inorganized matter? And this introduces another nice question. We know what number makes a conspiracy, or a congregation, or a riot: but what number makes a school? Are six or seven not a school, merely because each individual has twenty times as much interest in the teacher, as if it contributed to swell, as a drop does the ocean, one of Mr. Wilderspin's miniature Babels? Shall a hundred children under one teacher be returned, and not the same number under ten? For my own part I think great books, great towns, great churches, and great schools, all equally great evils. Again, what makes a scholar?

Some people think a child is a scholar who comes now and then; or even if its name be not yet withdrawn; or even if it be "regaled with tea and cake" once a year in a particular room, or a particular field.

It ought to be clearly defined what is the tie of connection between a school and a denomination: i. e., whether the creed of the master, or of the scholars; or the matter of instruction; or the sources of the payment. The question is a grave one, for half the schoolmasters in England would not like to declare their schools connected with any denomination: and Lord John Russell will require more than the wisdom of Solomon to decide which of the parties in the present dispute many schools belong to. Perhaps the master is a man with no doctrinal preferences; but the greater part of his scholars are children of church-people. Is it therefore a Church school? It turns out however, that most of the books he uses, were written by Socinians; so they may reasonably put in a claim. On further enquiry, it appears that some of the scholars are taught the Assembly's Catechism. As if however, to counterbalance the Kirk, it is discovered that an equal number at the request of their parents read out of the Douay version of the Bible. The claimants are at last induced to leave the court, by finding out, not which has most right to the school, but that it would be no great credit to any of them. With other waifs and strays therefore it

is handed over to "the religious denominations" in their new collective capacity.

Again, nothing is specified as to *age*. I have been in a school-room where were assembled together at different hours of the same day, all ages from three to thirty; all receiving religious instruction. Now as some of the authorities consulted in drawing up this Return may choose to extend the period of childhood to twenty, and others may limit it to twelve, it is obvious that the said Return, like a lens of irregular density, will not convey a correct representation or image of the fact.

There is also no necessary connection between the children receiving education in a given parish, and the schools in the same parish. Several children in my parish go to schools in another parish; and on the other hand several children in other parishes come to a school in my parish. If I insert in *my* Return *both* of these classes, and my neighbours do the same, it is obvious that all these children (who bear a considerable proportion to the whole) will be reckoned twice over. If on the other hand from excessive scrupulosity we insert neither of them, then a third or more of all the children we have to do with will not be returned at all. Now I need scarcely remark that I may consider these children in or out of my parish, just as I please: but in this instance it is hard to say whether the whole Return will suffer most from a uniform or from a different rule being adopted by the several authorities consulted.

All these are so many flaws in the specifications and method of arrangement, which ought to be such as to elicit necessarily a complete and uniform statement of the facts of the case. In order to classify correctly, it is requisite first that the materials be described properly, or *given*, as mathematicians say; and afterwards they should be so divided that none can be left out, and none reckoned more than once. The power of performing these processes correctly is one of the chief tests of an educated mind, and they are not always easy. They have not been performed with ordinary correctness in the present instance. The materials are not defined. There is room for the greatest variety of opinion concerning the schools and the scholars here referred to, and the classes under which they are to be arranged. I respectfully submit therefore that the persons who have drawn up this document ought to be sent to school again themselves; at least, that they present much too imperfect a specimen of education, to have been intrusted with the important office of examining into the statistics of religious instruction and education throughout all England.

I have hitherto spoken only of the queries relating to schools, which appear at first sight, the turning point of the enquiry. I say, "at first sight," because on further examination it will be found, that a literal answer to the questions must produce a very exaggerated impression of the number of dis-

senters. So perhaps *that* is really the object of the enquiry. I believe however, that my own reason for taking the schools first, has been the circumstances of my own parish, in which there is no dissenting place of worship, and therefore no difficulty in answering questions on this head. I must not however, be too hasty in my self-gratulation. There are one or two persons in my parish who I suspect prefer the dissenting style of worship, and who may, for anything I know to the contrary, meet sometime, somewhere, to satisfy this taste. One of them says that though she does not come to Church, Chapel sometimes comes to her: so that if I should ever see the complete Return of my own parish, I may find that her fire-side figures as a place of worship. Again, a man, who, *quasi lucus a non lucendo*, is called a local preacher, sometimes wanders into my parish, and preaches by the road-side. He sometimes has hearers; I may say always, as he wisely so chooses his position, and pitches his voice, as to be heard by the inmates of about a dozen cottages, whether they will or no; nay, on a still day, I have heard him myself, though my house is the farthest in the village. Now the same person who keeps a church at home for her private use, is able on occasion to create one round the person of this preacher; and so zealous is she for the honour of her creation, that she stops passengers, with the remonstrance, "Dont you know that this is Chapel?" I may perhaps discover in due time, that my fellow autho-

rities employed in this Return have been as ingenious as she is, in "giving to airy nothings a local habitation and a name." Thus a fire-side, or a road-side, nay, a whole village, may be considered a dissenting place of worship. At a neighbouring village, a young lady stationed herself near the churchyard gate, and continued her harangues during the service, at such a key, that every word was heard by the assembled congregation. The clergyman himself was almost stunned and fascinated, as it were, into silent attention. Thus the Church, with all its contents, was in a manner absorbed into the fair preacher's audience, and became, against its will, a dissenting place of worship. Like a well-known nursery heroine,

> "She ate the Church, and ate the steeple;
> Ate parson, clerk, and all the people."

Now I maintain that if this lady is consulted as to the religious instruction of that parish for that Sunday, it is only justice to her zeal and strength of lungs, to assign to her the whole population.

Why need I mention camp meetings, and class meetings, and all the numerous family of prayer meetings, centennial, triennial, yearly, monthly, weekly, daily, or nightly; on downs, in orchards, barns, haylofts, or kitchens; ministered to by men, women, children, by no one, or by every one? Who is to determine what is a place of worship, what its denomination is, what constitutes worship at all, and what makes a member? Is it worship simply to

hear preaching ; to hear Christ's Holy Church reviled ; to sit still, and neither speak nor hear ; to eat a good dinner ; to jump, to shake, to dance, or to play ?

My Lord John Russell reposes much more confidence than I would, in Boards of Guardians and Relieving Officers, when he leaves them to decide what is worship, what is a place of worship, and what denomination it belongs to. Let him look at home first. The House of Commons is a place of worship ; not because it is in St. Stephen's Chapel, which it no longer is ; nor yet because sermons are sometimes preached there ; but because prayers are, or ought to be, offered up there by the representatives of a Christian people before every act of deliberation. But who shall say what denomination the House of Commons belongs to ? Does Babylon, or Cuthah, or Ava, or Hamath, or Sepharvaim, preponderate there ? Again, Exeter Hall is a place of worship, or rather a nest of conventicles, though there also the versatile *genius loci* " *Omnia transformat sese in miracula rerum.*" What modern Aristæus has the power to grasp, to chain, to identify, and to describe, its Protean denomination ? To take another delicate case, while I am writing, the Adelphi Theatre has the greatest right to be called a place of worship. It may not perhaps like the theatres of old have been formally dedicated to Bacchus and Venus ; but the newspapers inform us that certain solemn acts of worship are

performed in it, while a vast congregation sits, and sees, and hears, and admires, much as some do at Church or Meeting. I am conscious of not having been sufficiently grave in some of my former examples of difficulty, but let the Editor of the *Spectator* be my judge whether I am trifling now. That very able and very serious journal is always anxious to view things in their real light, divested of the specious colours of hypotheses and the confusion of accidental circumstances. It does not allow of any "*as it were*," but describes what is taking place at the Adelphi *as it is:* and its testimony is all the more valuable because it is unprejudiced; it has no superstitious scruples, no hypocritical pretence: on the contrary, its taste for realities evidently is its chief source of interest in the extraordinary performance.

"The appearance of 'the Bayaderes,' says the Spectator, "on the Adelphi stage, and in a *piece d'occasion* dignified with the title of a drama, does not in the least affect their performances, which seem anything but theatrical in character: they stand out from the scenic background of paint and tinsel as distinctly as do all natural realities surrounded by mere illusion.

The withdrawal of a curtain veiling the *sanctum sanctorum* of a Brahminical temple, discloses the five Bayaderes grouped round the image of Vishnu, which they are fanning with red and white coloured horsetails; the platform on which they stand glides forward, and the features of this strange sight then became more apparent.

* * * * * *

We subjoin some interesting particulars of the Bayaderes, from the Journal des Debats,—premising that persons acquainted with Brahminical customs, do not consider the dancers can be of so high caste as is represented.

The Bayaderes come from Tirouvendi, a small town six leagues from Pondicherry. They are five in number, of the caste of Medeli, all

priestesses, and married to Peronmala, their god—from the eldest, who is thirty, to the youngest, who is but six years old. From their birth they are destined to a religious life, and they are married as it is called when they are consecrated to that god in whose pagoda they serve," &c.

Now I leave to the *Spectator* and to the Relieving Officer of the Poor Law Union wherein the Adelphi is situated, to settle between themselves whether that theatre is not *pro tempore*, a Temple of Vishnu, or, as the latter would return it, a dissenting place of worship of the Hindoo Denomination.

Another case fairly admits of a question. About fifty years ago, a writer in the Scholar Armed, the "Tracts for the Times" of those days, noticed as an example of the revival of heathen superstitions the words of dedication on the organ in the Music Room at Oxford, *Apollini sacrum*. If I remember right, his remarks implied that the Music Room was thereby made a Temple of Apollo; and all the music, as far as the organ was concerned, became the worship of that deity. In spite of his friendly remonstrance, the dedication still continued when I was last in the room, which has thus preserved its heathen denomination with far greater sameness and permanency than hundreds of the places of worship which will appear in Lord John Russell's Return. If Mr. Jones of Nayland, the writer I refer to, had heard a composition performed there, of which the only words a vulgar ear can detect are "Glorious Apollo," he would not have hesitated for a moment

how to describe this room. At least, I think the benevolent gentleman who has thought it necessary to write Μὴ τούτοις προσκυνεῖτε under a collection of Indian idols in the Ashmolean Museum, might have found a few paces down Holywell-street, a more timely occasion for his caution.

Let us suppose, however, that the Relieving Officer has never heard of Vishnu or Apollo, and holds nothing to be a dissenting place of worship but what has been duly licensed as such under the Act of Parliament. Still his work will not be always easy, and must often be very unfair. All the dissenting communities that we know of are in a state, if state it can be called, of continual flux and transition—a never-ending decomposition; never-ending, because, as Jeremy Bentham says, the corruption of one system is the generation of another; and the dissenting principle once allowed, is ever re-producing the materials whereon it works, "*nec fibris requies datur ulla renatis.*" They are not founded on "a rock," and therefore they are always falling to ruin: their doctrine, their discipline, their organization, and their comparative numbers are always changing; always on the totter, or going, or gone. Prosperity makes them swarm into fresh heresies, adversity extinguishes them: both destroy their semblance of unity; the one by division, the other by annihilation, or by reducing them to a bare existence more like the long decay of Tithonus, than the Church's green old age.

For example, there are hundreds of endowed meeting-houses that grew up in the genial reign of William the Third, and were founded for the worship of God after the Puritan fashion. Nearly all these have fulfilled their destiny, the sure destiny of every plant which God hath not planted, and like their mother at Geneva, have settled into Socinianism. How are these to be denominated? They call themselves generally Unitarians: but if we look to the title deeds of their meeting-houses, and of their endowments, we shall probably find this a very inadequate expression of their original views. Indeed they only give a name from sheer necessity, because they are sometimes asked for one: they would rather have no denomination at all, because it seems to imply a distinct creed, which they utterly repudiate. They cannot be described with reference to the views of their preachers, as they boast they go not to be instructed, but to judge for themselves: and, on the other hand, it is difficult to ascertain from the views of the hearers, what is the prevailing doctrinal character of the body. While one minister is compelled to suppress the portion of truth he may still retain, by his arrogant paymasters—another is unawares cutting away the ground from under the whole of an "orthodox" congregation, by a voluntary suppression of the truth: and cases have been known of simple-minded members surviving the general wreck of faith many years, still dreaming that all was right. It is mani-

fest therefore that these places may be variously denominated, either according to the original foundation, or to the ministers, or to the congregation; and again according to the older, or to the rising, or to the richer, portion of the congregation.

I grant, however, that in most cases it will not be difficult to determine the denomination of the party in legal possession of the tenement at the very moment the Relieving Officer makes his enquiry. But the following fact will illustrate the value of the information he obtains. In a manufacturing town of not thirty thousand inhabitants, with which I am well acquainted, five capacious places of worship have been advertised for sale within, I think, not more than as many years. They all had been mortgaged; all were occupied by failing congregations; all, with perhaps one exception, have actually changed hands, and some have changed denominations; and all, as a matter of course, have been taken possession of by persons who might be called adventurers—I mean in the same sense as a single missionary may be called an adventurer, for he has to make his congregation, not finding one made to his hands. Now Lord John Russell's solemn Doomsday Book of Religious Instruction, if it had recorded, once for ever, the denominations of these buildings at Midsummer, would not even then have told the whole truth, and, by the ensuing Michaelmas, would have been utterly falsified.

The Relieving Officer calls on Mr. Abel, whose

dwelling abuts on the unsightly rear of a spacious and showy conventicle ; he produces his scheme of queries, and, as in duty bound, he fills up the blanks on Mr. A.'s authority, crediting his sect with twelve hundred sittings. In a few weeks, the new doctrine is exploded, or the builder becomes bankrupt, or the lawyer forecloses, and the twelve hundred sittings ought forthwith to be transferred to another column in the account, but meanwhile the scheme has been filled up, and returned to the Home Office; the Report has been made, printed, and laid before Parliament, and perhaps already furnished the data of legislation. It would, perhaps, be thought prying to make such additional enquiries, as, What is the number and zeal of the congregation ? Is it, so to speak, a good life ? Does it pay ? Has it notice to quit ? Does there sit upon it that incubus of meeting-houses, a relentless mortgagee ? But such an enquiry would not be more indelicate than laying open the Church's sores ; and numbering against her, side by side, her rebellious offspring.

It would be of some use too, with a view to ascertain the comparative stability of divers religions, if after naming the sect occupying each meeting-house, a clause was introduced, whenever possible, like that often found in Doomsday book, "*et tenuit regno Edvardi*," though this, perhaps, would create too invidious a distinction in favour of the Church.

In the town I have referred to, there were at one

time two large meeting-houses, besides, I believe, a licensed room, belonging to the Swedenborgians, and school-rooms with about two hundred children. The zealous curate of the parish in which the largest of these fungi had sprung up, did but point his lance at them, and they all vanished into thin air : the sect disappeared, but, unhappily, not the buildings, which having been swept and garnished, have since been occupied by spirits at least as bad as the first.

As well could the painter make the running stream or the raging sea sit to its portrait, or transfer to his canvas the clouds driven by the south-west, as Lord John and his friends set forth in a tabular scheme the relative condition of the denominations, in every stage of being, some parturient, some nascent, some putrescent, some evanescent. That statesman is himself the not over-filial son of a Church, whose constitution and doctrines and worship have some sort of anchorage, and so some identity from age to age ; perhaps, therefore, from this very cause, he forms an undue estimate of the stability and regularity of "other denominations." Let him remember, however, that though a straight line is always the same, crooked lines are infinitely various ; and if a body neither obeys its first impulse, nor moves by a certain law, its motions will be always beyond the reach of calculation or even description.

A church once consecrated seldom ceases to be a

church, unless the site be very inconvenient, or the hand of violence and plunder interfere ; the Return, therefore, made in November, A.D., 1838, may be reasonably expected to hold good to the end of time. But the meeting-house is the temporary hive of an ephemeral swarm ; it is transient as well in its structure and tenure, as in its purposes. It is often only rented or leasehold, while its walls and roof are calculated not to last longer than the lease,—and wisely, for the sect will probably not last so long. To-morrow it will become, as may be, a manufactory, a dwelling-house, a gin-shop, the resort of a rival sect, or a chapel of ease to the Church ; when the return now made of its occupancy will cease to be true. Perhaps the most permanent occupier is the wine-merchant who rents the vaults below, and whose port would never ripen if it experienced the vicissitudes of the floor above.

I will proceed to the query concerning the Capacity of Churches and Meeting-Houses. The first thing that strikes one is, that the queries concerning the Places of Worship, and those concerning Schools, are not on a uniform principle. The capacity of the former, and the number of children in the latter, is asked. Why not the numbers of both, or the capacities of both ? The paper calls itself a " Return of the amount of Religious Instruction and Education." Does it mean the amount *offered*, or the amount *received?* This ambiguity

in the title developes itself in the substance of the queries. The amount tendered is asked under the head of places of worship—the amount accepted, under the head of schools. One thing is clear, that in the apparent result, whether it was so intended or not, the Dissenters will profit by the ambiguity. As they certainly have both more children in their schools, and more sittings in their meeting-houses, in proportion to their real adult members, or even their frequenters, than the Church.

If it had really been the object of our inquisitors to obtain all the facts of the case, and to do justice to all parties, they would have drawn up their queries so as to elicit both these amounts.—1. All the means and opportunities offered by the Church and the several bodies of Dissenters. 2. The numbers of persons using those means. Doubtless it would not have been *easy* so to draw them up : but almost any method would have been *fairer* than the one adopted ; which must inevitably convey a most exaggerated impression of both these amounts on the dissenting side, and one most imperfect and unfavourable on the side of the Church. The ambiguity in the title and details of the Return is of such a nature as not to produce these amounts *directly*, but to produce certain indirect and delusive approximations to them. I have already shown this with regard to the schools, and will only add one remark on that subject. Every dissenting school is pro-

fessedly, nay, ostentatiously, dissenting: it cannot be mistaken. Whereas in a country where law and custom take for granted all are church-people, unless they say they are not; where the Church is constitutional, indigenous and natural, a school does not generally profess that, which the absence of any profession implies. It does not take a distinct name, and therefore it can be easily put by fraud or oversight, into the wrong side of the account.

It will be found that the return of places of worship, and their capacities will, for obvious reasons, inevitably lead to equally unfair deductions. Now I grant that it would have been impossible to procure from either clergymen or dissenting ministers, any statement of the numbers attached to their communion, which could be depended upon. Clergymen would have been bound by law to return all the baptized persons in their parishes, as they are bound by law to read over them, if brought for burial, a service which declares them to be members of the Church. Nor do I know on what other principle they could have made their Return. On the other hand, dissenting preachers without any such legal compulsion would probably, and not unreasonably, have adopted principles almost equally broad. In the United States, the aggregate of the numbers returned by the several denominations is generally found to exceed, and has sometimes been found to double, the whole population of a city. Strange to

say, the very circumstance which accounts for these self-destructive returns, exposes still further the untruth of them. It seems there are many who belong to no sect in particular, but alternately sip the sweets of all; so that one churchman may be cut up into twenty dissenters, and be reckoned twenty times over.

I grant also that it would not be fit to take a man's own evidence, as to the community he belongs to; as that does not depend on his own will, or at least ought not, and his actions might contradict his professions. It was the former not the latter of these that Solon's law against neutrality referred to, so that would be no justification of such a procedure.

But I am not concerned to shew what other method might have been adopted. It is enough to prove the flagrant inequality of the test used in the present instance. Nothing is more notorious than that the supply of Church accommodation is now, and has long been, very unequal to the demand, and it is as notorious that the reverse is true of the Dissenters. With them the supply always outstrips the demand. There is probably scarcely a parish in England, where there are not eager contentions for pews and sittings in churches: and again, there is probably not a town of any considerable size, where not only sittings and pews, but whole meeting-houses are to be got for half or two-thirds the original cost. The Church, as far as visible ways

and means are concerned, grows like the oak: Dissent like the ash or willow. There are all kinds of technical and accidental difficulties in the way of building or enlarging a Church; whereas any labourer may make his cottage a meeting-house at an hour's notice. In towns, meeting-houses are as much a speculation as any other building; and are raised as much in *anticipation* of the demand: while even in villages two or three farmers and small tradesmen, constituting at first the whole of their sect, will build a meeting-house to hold two or three hundred. Nay, there are large districts that have been covered with these structures mainly at the expense of some one person: whose zeal was not attachment to any one sect, but hostility to the Church; and whose object therefore was, that as many as possible should for the future have the *opportunity* of hearing some one else than their clergyman, whatever their present inclinations or their present opinions might be. Now, in such cases as these, what sort of approximation will capacity be to the real members of any particular sect, or even of Dissenters generally?

In many places, the hours of the meeting-house, either from real respect or from prudence, do not clash with the service of the church. This is the case not only with the Methodists, who generally profess themselves still members of the Church; but even sometimes with Baptists and Independents, whose principles lead in the end to an absolute

separation. In one parish I could name every body who goes anywhere comes regularly to Church; but there is also a Methodist meeting, where two or three hundred as regularly assemble. In another parish there are not more than twenty who go to the Baptist meeting only, though in the evening it is generally attended by, I should think, more than a hundred. Now it is manifest that in such cases as these, the number of sittings will bear a very exaggerated, and indefinite, ratio to the number of members. Such facts also, though it cannot be denied they cut both ways, tell as much for the attachment, as they do against the obedience, of the people to the Church.

Sittings are what dissenters almost exclusively aim at: they consult indeed expense, and comfort, and show; but sittings are their paramount object. They are not restricted as we are by the parochial system: the heaven-drawn lines and golden fetters of discipline no more affect them, than they do the builders of an inn, a ball-room, or a theatre; so they build not for a pastor's flock, but for mixed multitudes gathered to their great occasions, their anniversaries, or their dippings; to hear the eloquence of some wandering star, some comet employed to circulate a meteoric light and heat round their ever-languishing systems. They care not for the durability of either the spiritual or the material structure—posterity has done nothing for them, what should

they do for posterity ?—nor seek they majestic and aweful proportions; neatness and snugness are the cheap and congenial excellencies they are content with. If ever they do aspire to anything transcendental, it is an imposing *façade*, some shadowy frontispiece of stone or stucco; which makes the whole building remind one of those animals said to be produced from the mud of the Nile; of which the head may be seen developed in form and color, while the trunk and members have not fully emerged from their parent slime.

Capacity then, which for the present we have assumed to mean the number of sittings, is no test of their numbers; as it always far exceeds them. Nor is it a better test of the Church's number. The capacity of a church does not indicate the number of those who have been baptized into the Church, nor of those who consider themselves members of the Church, nor of those who come sometimes, nor of those who would come always if sittings were found them, nor of those who would be found constant and attached members of the Church, if she should ever receive from the powers that be the liberty to adapt her system more to the real wants of a religious people. The test of numbers then, which Lord John Russell and his friends indirectly propose, will give rise to a return neither of the numbers of the Church; nor of the means of religious instruction

which she is willing to offer, and the people willing to accept.

A few words on the subject of capacity, which needs definition as much as every other term used in these Queries. The word has many different significations. Four or five centuries ago no one would think a church capacious enough for a given population, unless it would contain the whole of them, men, women, and children, with plenty of room for them to pass from one part of the church to another for various religious purposes. Again, if a church is divided into large pews, of which some are empty, and many just sprinkled with fragments of families, the usual attendance will be, say, 500: if it be all open seats with space for kneeling, its capacity will perhaps be 750: if the congregation are not indulged with the liberty of kneeling, then as many as 1000 will be able to sit and pray, or to adopt occasionally, if they please, a certain mid-course between sitting and kneeling, which has all the apparent decency of the latter, and at the same time affords greater bodily ease than either: if by the help of galleries another stratum of human bodies, with the same range of postures, be extended over three-fourths of the church, then taking into account the room lost in stairs and passages, 1500 may be accommodated: while perhaps as many could join the service with less personal comfort, but more reverence to the place, if galleries and

seats were alike removed, and all who are strong enough would submit to stand or kneel ; an alternative of no great hardship to most people in the presence of God.

Now standing, sitting, kneeling, and the fourth position I have referred to, are all very different things, and produce corresponding difference of meaning in the word capacity. It will also be admitted that both standing and kneeling are more suitable to the worship of God than sitting. I maintain therefore that standings with the power of kneeling have more right to be called church accommodation, and in the aggregate to constitute capacity, than sittings without that power. Nay, further, both standing and kneeling are postures of prayer, and sitting is not; so that we may becomingly stand, though not becomingly sit, through the whole service. The standing room of our churches should therefore be included in the capacity, which in those of any antiquity is very considerable. It is not unusual to see hundreds gladly standing throughout the service in our spacious aisles and chancels when there is any extraordinary attraction : why should not their standings tell in a return as well as the sittings of the dissenters, which we know are never filled except on similar occasions.

Mere space however, may be considered capacity without involving the discipline of standing. In my

own little church about thirty children and others sit on loose forms placed in the aisle and chancel, or on the step of the communion rail; and I have been one of a congregation in St. Paul's, which I was told amounted to 16,000. On these principles, the capacity of our cathedrals and collegiate churches would be rated at thousands; and why should it not? when it was the chief purpose of those buildings to accommodate vast congregations assembled from the whole neighbourhood at the great festivals of the church, to join in solemn acts of united worship. Time was, those aisles were not the barren wilderness of stone which now they seem to many; they were once ever living with prayer and praise. What has been may be again.

I have said that power of kneeling should be a condition of capacity: we may reasonably ask more. Is it fit to reckon places in a church against places in a meeting-house? Is it nothing that one building generally is worthy of Him whose presence it is: and the other is an insult to Him? that the one elevates the soul, and the other hardly ever fails to vulgarize it? Should rulers like ours, with such keen perceptions of outward comeliness and splendour, value them in their own houses and equipages, and put them out of count in the house and service of their Maker? To take a lesson from secular things, who would estimate the capacity of the town residences of our nobility on the same

principle as the lodging-houses in St.Giles's? Woburn Abbey is probably twice as large as a Union Workhouse built for 400 paupers; and on an emergency would perhaps accommodate a regiment of cavalry and two or three of infantry; yet its noble owner would doubtless think it amply filled with his family, some twenty or thirty guests, and servants in proportion. That would be his estimate of its capacity; which term would imply not only standing, or sitting, or lying, or breathing, room; but space and dignity; fair proportions and splendid objects; freedom from interruption and confusion; power of solitude to a certain extent, and other like agreeablenesses. Certain qualities like these, or corresponding to these, there are in our old Churches, and still ought to be. They may, therefore reasonably demand to be considered ingredients of capacity; and a capacity which includes them should not be reckoned numerically against a capacity of a lower kind.

I feel that I have been trespassing on your patience far beyond the claims of an anonymous stranger. Such a length of words was scarcely necessary to shew the slovenly, and therefore mischievous, construction of these Queries. If Government had desired to ascertain certain facts relating to the importation of eggs, or the amount of garden-stuff brought to the several London Markets, they would probably have consulted those who know

something about the matter, and were, by office or line of life, concerned in it. The investigation in that case would, perhaps, have been fairly conducted, and would, at least, have had a business-like air. This cannot be said of the Queries before us, though on the highest and most important of all subjects.

The vaguest terms are used without definition. It is left to chance or conjecture what is to be comprehended at all, and what is to be excluded. No two persons employed in presenting, or in answering, the Queries, will be guided by the same principle. The Return will not be an approximation to any uniform system of facts, or any uniform system of statements whatever, be they facts or falsehoods.

It is obvious how convenient for certain schemes will be an overflowing return of Dissenters and their schools, and a half or a third return of church-people and their schools. The Church and Dissent will be forthwith made the equal and rival bases of some proud Colossus of Education. Lord John will try, though he may try in vain, to yoke together these diverse cattle—to sow the land with these diverse seed—to weave with these diverse threads a robe to clothe the nakedness of his country, which he is so anxious to expose. Let him and his beware. These mongrel systems are but forced and temporary. They soon fail themselves and ruin their

devisors. Dissent is ever perishing, the Church is imperishable. The mortal παρήορος will soon lie in the dust, and by his fall entangle the harness of worldly wisdom, and break the yoke of worldly power, and for a time encumber his unwilling fellow. Sharp and decisive then must be the sword to extricate the living from the dead. But though Dissent shall die, there is a power in it, as well as in theChurch—for it is the Church's counterpart—greater than the worldly statesman dreams of. Does he think that either the one or the other, in the hour of plenary triumph, would suffer such as he to hold the destinies of England? While he thinks to hold the balance between two rival parties, he is only preparing them for their last struggle. The one will soon be delivered from all its so called "grievances," and the other stripped of all its so called "privileges;" then the true nature and the intrinsic might of both will appear. Before that time arrive, Lord John had best retire from a strife, for which his present petty warfare can be no preparation, remembering in time

> "'Tis dangerous, when baser natures come
> Between the pass and fell incensed points
> Of mighty opposites."

I have precluded myself by my length from noticing what is really the most important and most obnoxious feature of this Inquiry, viz., the persons em-

ployed in making it, and the mode in which it is conducted. In all matters relating to the Church, education, and dissent, the Bishop is the proper channel of communication with the clergy. By my canonical obedience to him, I am bound to report to him the condition of my parish in all these matters, to allow no masters and no instruction that he does not license, to report to him dissent and other such offences, not with a view to their being made the permanent basis of a system of compromise, but in order to their suppression. There is scarcely however a single function of Episcopal superintendence, which is not being now transferred to the various officers of the Unions. Lord John is our minister of public instruction: his irresponsible agents are sent about to collect evidence, to choose it, to sort it, to reconcile it, to sum it, with no check whatever upon their care or honesty, not even the check of publicity. The clergyman will not see the Report till it is published and acted upon. And yet the office of receiving and summing evidence, thus made the unseen, unchecked, παράργον of an irresponsible petty officer, has usually been made the office of the Judge in our constitution.

But this is too large and grave a subject to be entered upon in this stage of my observations. Requesting you to pardon the liberty I have taken in addressing them to you, and repeating the ex-

pression of confidence in your truly English character, with which I began,

I have the honour to be,
SIR,
Your humble and obedient servant,

A CLERGYMAN OF SOUTH WILTS.

Nov. 16, 1838.

SALISBURY:
PRINTED BY JOHN B. TAYLOR,
HERALD OFFICE.

The object of this Pamphlet is not the formation of fine periods, but to afford a practical opinion on the state of Education; and, if possible, to excite an active interest in the subject, and a full investigation of it in all parts of England.

ON THE

EDUCATION

OF THE

MIDDLE CLASSES,

&c. &c.

On no other subject is there in England a greater diversity of opinion than on education; if other evidence were wanting, from this fact only, its defective state might be inferred. The duty of educating children, and its obligation on parents, is generally acknowledged; but from some cause or other, the practical part is far from being well executed. In its limited sense, education may imply such instruction in arts or sciences as may render an individual capable of faithfully and ably discharging the duties of his station, but in its extended sense, it comprises a rigid discipline of the mind; under the former view it is apparent, that different degrees of literary and scientific attainments must be necessary for the different classes of society.

For the nobility, who are legislatures by birthright, in addition to languages and science, an extensive acquaintance with history, political economy and jurisprudence is indispensible.

Among the poorer classes of society, the requisite education is far more limited, and from the rapid strides with which it is extended among them, there is every prospect, that in a few years, there will be found no labourer not possessed of a knowledge of reading and writing.

The education for the middle classes, from the position which they hold in the state, ought to be equal to that required by the nobility; at present however, the generality obtain little more than what is given to the poorer classes. Without examining into the character of the schools, it requires no great discernment, from observing individual attainments, to come to this conclusion. As it must be allowed, that the chief wealth, strength and vigour of the nation is with the middle classes, and that all the trains of thought and modes of action, must materially depend on the training of the youthful mind; the education of that class demands the most serious attention not only of parents individually, but also of the legislature at large. It is superfluous to remark that the legislative superintendence of education generally accompanies the first dawn of civilization, and that with us no effectual care does exist.

Many states of antiquity were so solicitous about the education of their youth, for the various duties of civil life, that they would not entrust it solely to the parent. By the laws of Solon, the children were excused from maintaining their parents, if they had neglected to train

them up to some useful art or profession. If pagans therefore enforced education from a conviction of its utility in curbing the passions and rendering men useful in both their private and public capacities, ought not Christians anxiously to exert themselves to extend its beneficial effects? Upon a strict comparison however between ourselves and them, I apprehend we shall be found inferior both in the care and means employed. We can however observe in them its ameliorating effects even when unaided by true religion, and see its narrow limits amongst ourselves, and thence anticipate, under the blessings of Providence, a long and prosperous course for our native country.

A cursory review of the courses of education pursued in our public and private schools, might induce an opinion that little is left to be desired in our present system as a whole; but the general complaints of the inefficiency of both the one and the other, corroborated as those complaints are by the numerous proprietary schools which have been established, are a convincing and decisive proof that their excellence only exists in supposition.

In considering the subject we may inquire, how far it is desirable and how far it is possible to extend the range of education, and how far such an extension might affect the interests of the empire, or the relations of social life. To the first and the last of these enquiries, by strict inductions from existing facts and historical data, we should infer that education is with us in a state of infancy, and that its extension would be accompanied with the most happy effects; if its possibility were doubted, we have only to turn our eyes to France, and we at once perceive that in England the youth receive a much inferior

education to those of a corresponding rank of life in that country* but that among the middle ranks this inferiority is the most apparent. It is even doubtful how far on the whole, the youth of England may be better versed in Greek and Latin, but with us, those languages are at present almost their only course of study. But where with us do we find as in France, youths well skilled in history, sculpture, engineering and mathematics? in France however such studies form a part of a system, and a youth of ability neither does nor can fail to obtain a considerable proficiency in them. No one in the habit of associating freely with young Frenchmen of the middle classes, can fail to observe that it is as uncommon to meet with one not possessing a general knowledge of most sciences, as it is to meet with an Englishman possessing any knowledge of them. I disclaim all contention on the disputed subject of morality, because if we have at present the advantage in that respect, a more extended education would give a still great balance in our favour. It may indeed be assumed that education has been for some years, in France, the sole support of government and morality, for a very slight investigation of its internal state for the past century, would show that the state of religion rendered its effects any thing but salutary and effective as a moral engine; men of superior intellect and influence have there been able to establish a system of education which is congenial to the laws and habits of the people; they saw what its effects would be,

* It must not be argued that their education produced revolution; if a tenth part of the unconstitutional proceedings which are adopted by the present French government, were adopted in England, should we not have an instant revolution? the effects of their education is most strongly evinced by the activity of individuals in extending the means of national prosperity, and in improving their knowledge in the arts and sciences.

and those effects are already beginning to develope themselves. In England however the very definitions and objects of education are little understood or comprehended; many imagine it to be limited to a learning of something by which the man may gain pence; it may indirectly serve to that purpose, but its objects and obligations are much higher and much more sacred—it is said

> 'Tis education forms the common mind,
> Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd.

But its beneficial effects are not confined to the common mind, but all minds take their bent from it, and in proportion as the mind may be above the common standard, so much the more does it require to be well educated, lest its superiority should be evinced by vice, not by excellency. If the mind be below par, it ought to be the most anxious care of parents to have their children well educated, for that is the only means of rendering the man either efficient or comfortable even in private life. By improving education and extending its limits, we shall therefore best consult for the prosperity of our native country* and the individual happiness of our children, and at the same time, most conscientiously discharge the duty which is enforced upon all parents as a private, a public, and religious obligation.

It is unnecessary for the present purpose to investigate the nature of the mind or its mode of action. It is sufficient for us, that knowing its powers and capabilities, its inexhaustible vigour and tenacity, we have every

* Ignorance would not then enervate our public affairs, but competent men would take the helm, and they would be able to pick a good crew. The present complaints of the want of talented and capable men would no longer be heard; if a demagogue should chance to appear, he would not be able to gain an audience.

encouragement to proceed eagerly in the developing and enlarging of its faculties. Its powers decay, not with the decay of the body, but every successive year can be made to increase its vigour and energy.

Nothing can be more gratifying, than the contemplation of an old man whose mind rises superior to the infirmities of the body; it is a proof that by cultivation we can ensure our mental energy even to the very last stage of decrepitude – an energy of intellect which can in some measure compensate for the absence of all other enjoyments. Who does not picture to himself an ideal form borne down by age, but of unclouded intellect, as an emblem of what he would wish to be? But if in youth the mental energies be allowed to spend themselves in trifles, the young man must be empty and the old man silly; if then the youth has been neglected, the young man ought to use every exertion to obtain that cultivation of intellect; he should not weigh and compare himself with those as ignorant as himself, but measure himself with those of superior attainments; the race is not always to those who gain the start, perseverance and application will effect great things. Those also who wish to retain their intellects unimpaired, should not only promote their cultivation by some species of mental exercise, but should strictly abstain from all acts of intemperance; nothing has a more debilitating effect on the mind than habitual intoxication, or excitement from liquor; it completely undermines the energies of the body, and cramps and destroys the elasticity of the mind.

Quin corpus onustum
Hesternis vitiis animum quoque prægravat unâ.

But if a man once surrender himself to a habit of

gluttony or inebriety, there is little hope that in his state of mental imbecility, he will be able to rescue himself from his degraded condition.

I know these remarks can have no effect on the parties to whom they apply; it is only asking the madman to be sane. Can an idiot make himself of sound mind? then a drunkard can become temperate. The object of education must be to prevent such instances, and if we compare and consider the cases of drunkenness, and other vices, which fall beneath the notice of the police, the most flattering results are held out to us, for we shall find that in a thousand cases there will not be found ten instances where the individuals could be considered either educated or of a mediocrity of intellect; and unless also ignorance be deemed the source of religion, it cannot be supposed that the extension of education will not be accompanied by a corresponding spread of religion, and true piety. Those who consider the overthrow of religion in France as the effect of human learning, would upon investigation, find the real cause to have been the ignorance and vice of the French clergy. With us the most eminent characters in literature and science have always been equally distinguished for their attention to their religious duties; ignorance can only promote superstition, and in proportion as the mind is engaged in scientific or moral investigations, the germs of vice will be retarded or extinguished, and the man will become a better child, a better friend, a better father, a better citizen, and a better Christian.

> Friend, parent, neighbour first he will embrace,
> His country then, and next all human race;
> Wide and more wide, the expansions of his mind,
> Take every creature in of every kind;
> Earth smiles around with boundless beauty blest,
> And heaven beholds its image in his breast.

If it were necessary to prove that education can strengthen and improve the mental capacity, it might easily be inferred from a comparison of the two classes, the educated and the uneducated: no one will venture to assert that there is in different classes, or in different individuals, a difference of mental organization that can account for the wide chasm between an unlettered drayman and the man of science, between the learned and accomplished gentleman and the frequenter of taverns and stews.

The object of education being then, to improve and strengthen the mental faculties, by which must be understood the giving to them a vigour in obtaining and comparing ideas, and deducing results, it is evident that these qualities can only be cherished by being brought into continual exercise. Both analogy and experience teach us, that in the mind as in the body, the development of its powers depends on the exercise of them, and in discovering and applying the means of doing this most effectually consists the art of education. By pursuing the analogy, we shall be able to decide on the respective merits of different courses of study. It is evident that the only system that is desirable, is one which induces a habit of connected and consecutive reasoning and thought, and that we must at once condemn the custom of learning detached and unconnected facts and dates. If this analogy were considered, youth would be relieved from many useless and tedious crampings of their intellects. There would be no learning of lethean mnemonics or unintelligible nomenclatures. The time frequently spent in learning systems of historical mnemonics would be sufficient for the youth to commit the whole history to memory. He would then possess a connected knowledge of it, but the detached

portions learned by mnemonics quickly vanish from his memory. The chief use of history is in its delineation of cause and effect, and in showing how interest or the passions excite and direct the actions of men. History supplies to us the experience of our ancestors, and if we are competent to compare the past and the present, we may, as Thucydides remarks, form a good conjecture of the future. Its chief service is not the bare knowing the particulars of any certain fact, but in observing the causes which combined to produce such effects. In the nursery the child would be relieved from its lessons in spelling, and even some young ladies at school would no longer have to fag at half a score pages of Johnson's Dictionary; but both the nurse and the governess would discover that it would be a much better plan to allow their pupils to make regularly a fair copy of a few lines of good English, and that the plan of old Demosthenes was far more effectual than such things as a Carpenter's Spelling Book. Petty pedagogues would throw aside the Latin Latin grammar, as has already been done in our best public schools, and boys relieved from such preposterous trammels would learn the construing and declension of words at the same time, and the grammar of the language together with the language itself. The Hamiltonian teachers would quickly be in want of employment, and have leisure to learn the languages in which they have so long given worthless instructions. Ignorant people are frequently entrapped, from their pretensions to teach any language in six months. It is well known that many men are capable of such performances. Themistocles of old made such progress in Persian, that he could address, extempore, a public assembly in it. The defect of such systems

is, that the pupil learns to walk with crutches, and that he can never walk without them.

It seems almost unnecessary to point out the utility of learning Latin and Greek, or that the knowledge of them is indispensable to a man who wishes to rank as a gentleman. Without them it is impossible to obtain a sound and critical knowledge of our own and many other European languages. At the same time by their beautiful perspicuity and concinnity, they form an easy and pleasing exercise of the youthful capacity, and improve his style and enlarge his views by a contemplation and investigation of the modes of thought and action amongst men in the most remote periods of time. Cicero says of those who preceded him—"Quam multas notis imagines non solum ad intuendum, verum etiam ad imitandum, fortissimorum virorum expressas, Scriptores et Græci et Latini reliquerunt." No system of study could be better adapted for developing the youthful powers of reasoning, nor stronger evidence of its utility be desired than the ardour and assiduity which boys evince in the study of them, when under the direction of competent and judicious teachers. By them the youth stores his mind with definite words as the signs of ideas, gains an extensive knowledge of History and Philosophy, and rarely can he rise from the perusal of them without a consciousness of having imbibed some noble and patriotic sentiment. Any one may observe the greater degree of mental energy which evinces itself in a youth of fifteen, who has been well instructed in a course of classical reading, when compared with one who has been neglected, or under the care of incompetent masters. It must however be admitted, that however competent the teacher may be, the progress and ardour of the pupil

will depend chiefly on the manner and method of the master. It can only be owing to the defect in these, that boys frequently, even at our public grammar-schools, make so little progress. There are very few instances of boys being incompetent to learn the dead languages, and fewer still of their having a distaste for them, when properly instructed. Study, however, ought always to be presented to boys under its most attractive form, and they will then make a much more rapid progress than under a system of terror. At twelve or fourteen* a boy who has been diligently trained for four or five years, ought to be able to read Greek and Latin with some degree of ease, and their study ceases to supply the requisite degree of mental exertion. It is supposed that by this age, he will have obtained a considerable knowledge of Arithmetic, Geography, French, Drawing, &c. none of which demand great intellectual exercise. Much time and labour, however, is often very uselessly expended on youths above sixteen, in attempting to make them critical scholars. No diligence of the teacher can induce what is termed a classical taste, and it is not only useless, but injurious to the pupil to compel him to fag for days together in getting up a critical knowledge of Greek and Latin authors. It then ought to be considered, that the aim of education is not the knowlege of a Greek play, or a Latin epigram, and that other methods ought not to be neglected for the sake of a compulsory knowledge of either one or the other; the pupil then requires the stricter and more definite exercise of the faculties,

* Frequently at that age boys have to commence their education, and it is then discovered that their capacities, from not being exercised, have already become frozen and inactive.

which is indispensable in mathematical investigations. For besides their practical utility, no course of study is so well adapted to induce a rigid and connected course of reasoning. In them we have a language of signs, each of which comprehends the meanings of many words, and they are throughout succinct, concise, and unerring in their reasonings, deductions, and conclusions. They call into exercise not only much greater powers and exertions of thought, but require also a complete abstraction of the mind from external objects, and a consecutive exercise of the faculties. There must also be a full comprehension of the subject. Nothing can be half comprehended—it must be altogether understood, or it is not understood at all. If the train of thought be interrupted, it can only be renewed by returning to the source. If the mind be weak, this exercise strengthens it,* if it be ever so powerful, the nice and intricate calculations and investigations in mathematics afford it sufficient material whereon to exercise its utmost powers of comprehension and perception. Their superiority to any other system of logic is generally acknowledged, and is forcibly confirmed from the fact of the majority of our leading barristers and public men having been distinguished as mathematical scholars. It may be allowed to those who wish to decry them as a course of mental exercise, that there are distinguished mathematicians who are incompetent to reason with any thing but analytics; and are there not many men who are expert in one science and ignorant in all others?

* The mind is frequently on its full stretch, attempting to reach a point just a little higher than it has been accustomed to. Of all the occupations or amusements of the world at large, chess is the most like mathematical reading, not in the nature of the occupation, but in the state of tension which it produces.—Augustus de Morgan.

of such men, however, it may be generally observed, that they are equally unacquainted with mathematics. They may have obtained some knowledge of them by hard fagging; but from a natural sluggishness of intellect or imagination, they are incapable of comprehending the extent of the signification of their deductions. Because a man learns mathematics, the man of dialectics wishes to debar him the use of all other reading. But he learns mathematics that he may read well, reason well, and have correct ideas on numerous arts and sciences. My object, however, at present, is not with the higher parts of either Mathematics or Philosophy– de parvis agitur.

Mathematics, however, must not be understood to imply what is taught as such in the generality of schools, where it is confined to a lame knowledge of arithmetic, or in its higher flights ascends to a fruitless knowledge of four books of Euclid. It is an uncommon circumstance to meet with a teacher or professor of mathematics who is at all versed in the subject. Private schools, finding it necessary to give some attention to the subject, are in the habit of employing assistants barely competent to teach the first rudiments, and that they style "a teaching of Mathematics." There are few schools which do not include them in their course of studies, but the ignorance of the teachers precludes the possibility of the pupil obtaining any knowledge of them. At some schools, where they professedly prepare young men for Cambridge, the principals assert that a knowledge of four books of Euclid and quadratic equations is all that is desirable for a man to know before he goes to keep his terms. Can ignorance and impudence go farther?

Parents, however, are generally incompetent judges of the subject, and too often rely on the advice of others, equally unable to form an opinion. A knowledge of mathematics is also often assumed by common schoolmasters as a counterbalance to their undeniable ignorance of Latin and Greek. Some of these men omitting such petty things as Euclid and Geometry, pretend to have read Newton's Principia, and by a cunning parade of a few mathematical terms, frequently attain a high reputation amongst their more ignorant acquaintances. Amongst the class termed private teachers, the generality are equally ignorant of Latin, Greek, and mathematics. Some apology may, however, be made for many of these individuals, because they have no opportunity of measuring their attainments by any known standard, and therefore naturally compare themselves with others of equally low or inferior information. It ought to be the care of Government to supply this standard, and then teachers would be rated according to their real merit, and parents would have an easy method of ascertaining their qualifications. Every one at all acquainted with the subject, and competent to give an opinion on it, will acknowledge that mathematical education is in a lamentably low state in the private schools for the middle classes, and that in the major part of them Latin, Greek, and English, are taught in a manner equally inefficient. There may have been some slight improvement of late years. The proprietary schools will assist in bringing about a better state—but in them, generally, no great knowledge of mathematics has yet been obtained by the pupils. This may be owing to the insufficient attention given to the subject, or the want of system in the teachers.

In our public grammar-schools, mathematics are in some measure discarded. In construing too strictly the wills of the founders, the trustees and visitors overlook the aim and intent of the foundations.* At the period in which the principal schools were founded, mathematics were coupled, in the public estimation, with Astrology and Alchemy, and of course no provisions were made for such diabolical studies, or any other which were not common at the time. At present, therefore, although we find a mathematical teacher in most of those schools, so little time is devoted to his instructions, that however desirous he may be, he cannot insure either proficiency or even attention on the part of his pupils.† A complete change has already been made in the public grammar-school at Birmingham; and the like change must be eventually made at Eton, Winchester, Rugby, and all other schools of a similar description.§

Under the existing methods of proceeding, a boy may learn Latin and Greek, or he may not learn them—it rests entirely with himself. The best classics and critics, and the most elegant of our poets, may have been produced under the old systems, but to each pupil that excels, whole hecatombs of youthful minds are continually sacrificed. The man pays dearly for the honour of having

* We hear much of the solemn obligations imposed by the wills of founders. If Lord Holt is a true interpreter of their collegiate intentions, there are instances, we apprehend, of masters, fellows, and scholars in both Universities where both conditions—that of indigence and that of study, are but indifferently complied with.—*Edinburgh Review*, No. 118.

† Mathematics "are admitted to be a part of a liberal education in every part of the United Kingdom, except only in one or two endowed schools, and in the University of Oxford. In the former of our exceptions the study is tolerated on the same grounds as cricket and marbles; and in the latter, it is encouraged by the letter, and discouraged by the spirit, of the regulations, for the attainment of degrees."—AUGUSTUS DE MORGAN.

§ No institution of charity or of learning, can, after the lapse of 500 years fulfil the intentions, and represent the opinions which prevailed when its corner-stone was laid—*Edinburgh Review*, No. 118.

been at a public school for ten years, by being obliged to confess that he never learned to construe even a simple sentence of either Latin or Greek, or to understand even common arithmetic. These noble institutions might be made the source of great national benefit.* Their course of studies might be extended, and instead of sending to the Universities rare individuals who have excelled by their own exertion, or the especial care of their parents and private tutors, they might annually supply a large number of men, not only sound classics, but also well versed in mathematics and modern languages. The Legislature must give to them fresh courses of studies. The pupils and masters must be brought into closer contact; and when that has been done, it will be much easier to effect a renovation at Oxford and Cambridge.

The necessity and advantages of the study of mathematics are, however, daily becoming more acknowledged, but until they be strictly and effectually taught in these schools, they will never, I fear, become efficiently studied as a means of general education.

If we look to France, and ascertain the degree of ma-

* To effect such a change, the system of education so blindly and obstinately continued in our great public schools must be altered, for minds exclusively applied to classical pursuits, and trained to recognize no other objects of liberal study, are indisposed, and indeed disqualified for inquiries ministering to the arts of life, which are despised for their very connexion with utility. It is in the early ignorance of the rudiments of science that the after neglect of science has its source. – *Life of Sir Humphry Davy.*

Although it must be acknowledged, that a complete acquaintance with physical astronomy belongs to those who are well versed in the higher branches of mathematical science, and that they alone can appreciate the extreme beauty of the results, and of the means by which those results are obtained, it is nevertheless true, that a sufficient skill in analysis to follow the general outline—to see the mutual dependence of the different parts of the system, and to comprehend by what means some of the most extraordinary conclusions have been arrived at, is within the reach of many who shrink from the task, appalled by difficulties which perhaps are not more formidable than those incident to the study of the elements of every branch of knowledge. That the study of mathematics is full of interest, will be allowed by all who have devoted their time and attention to those pursuits.—*Mrs. Somerville on the Physical Sciences.*

thematical proficiency which is attained in their schools, we find youths of sixteen or eighteen well versed in a course of Algebra, Trigonometry, Differential Calculus, and Mechanics, both theoretical and practical, and some of them quite proficients in the Integral Calculus, Optics, Hydrostatics, and Astronomy. Where with us do we find such attainments at that age? Where could a youth at school have the opportunity of gaining such knowledge? I could name King's College, Bristol College, Wakefield College, and one or two more, where a youth might do this, but instances are as yet rare or unheard-of. Let not the promoters of popular mathematics, or their admirers, imagine that the reading of their books can impart a knowledge of an exact science, or that such works are useful as a mental exercise,* for they may assure themselves that their publications have a directly contrary tendency, and can only be ranked as next best to no education at all. Such books may do well enough to sell or to amuse, but they are too loose and general in their terms to be of any utility in promoting a habit of deep thought. The Cambridge course is the only system of mathematics which can be useful as a mental exercise for boys. We are deficient in books adapted for boys, but a competent teacher will be able to use those which are read in Cambridge. Many men will deny the possibility of a boy of sixteen comprehending any extent of mathematical reading—some men, whose opinions are of value, may doubt it, but it is done continually in France. Are we, then, as a nation, inferior in intellect? We are certainly, at the present day, in the methods of cultivating and strengthening it.

* Upon examining such treatises, we generally find that the facilities are afforded by avoiding the difficulties, not by encountering them. A ship of war which has been obliged to be *eased* by throwing her guns overboard, is a fit representation of most easy books on mathematical subjects. She looks as like a ship of war as ever, till the occasion for fighting arrives.—Augustus de Morgan.

It may be urged, that youths in England leave school too early for any great proficiency to be expected, and it is no uncommon occurrence to meet with youths of eighteen or twenty who are convinced of the serious error that was committed in taking them from school at an early age. Parents fancy that a youth can and will read at home; but however well he may be disposed to do so, he finds too many impediments in his way to do it effectually. Too often at that age, from being unemployed, he falls into vicious habits—this frequently arises from motives of economy, but upon exact calculation, parents would generally find themselves in error in that respect, but undoubtedly they are very far wrong in a moral view, for in no case ought a youth to have the free and uncontrolled command of himself at that age. He ought then to be most sedulously engaged. His mind is just blooming forth, and requires rigid training. If a habit of mental exertion be not then enforced, the past efforts will be fruitless, and the future unavailing. Let not any one fancy that youths of that age would become untractable at school—they are the very reverse—they appreciate the value of the instruction which is given them, and perceive the necessity of exertion. To prevent, however, the foolish ideas of their own importance, which youths sometimes exhibit at that age, they should always be kept under strict and unremitted discipline, but of that kind which acts rather by influence than by direct constraint. For whatever pursuit or profession a youth may be intended, he ought to be kept to his studies to the last; and if he be intended for the university, he ought to proceed directly from one to the other. The opportunity of contracting lazy habits ought to be prevented, for they are at all time more easily indulged than cured.

In France, youths generally remain at school till they are eighteen or nineteen, and I have frequently met with those of that age possessing a much more extended and definite knowledge of Mathematics than the generality of men who have graduated in the Mathematical Tripos. But it must be observed also, that in France there are only about six weeks of holidays in the year, and that in their higher schools the hours of daily attendance are much longer than in any of our schools, not excepting King's College, or others of the same description. On this account they not only study longer in the same period of time, but from not having the long interruptions which are common in England, they pursue them with more gust and avidity. Nothing, perhaps, with us, is more prejudicial to a youth in his studies than the long vacations, which in some cases amount to 14 weeks out of the 52, or to one-third of the whole.

The loose discipline, however, of our public schools, and the difficulty of finding competent teachers in private schools, or of discriminating amongst an infinity of ill-defined pretensions or attainments, affords parents, at present, very satisfactory reasons for retaining their sons at that age under their own roofs. Some parents perhaps require to be informed, that in addition to mathematics to be used as a mental discipline,* there are a host of other subjects in which a youth requires greater proficiency, or of which some knowledge is desirable, as useful and ornamental. He might pursue pencil-drawing, make himself a good draftsman, study architecture, read divinity, something of the laws and constitution, and many other subjects, with which it is fit that every gentleman should be intimate. He might learn European and Oriental languages, and whatever proficiency he might attain, the knowledge would never become burdensome, bnt might be of the utmost service.

Classes could be formed in metaphysical studies from youths of eighteen, and such authors as Brown on the Human Mind, would be read with great advantage. But before this can be done, teachers must be provided. Natural philosophy might also be cultivated, unless it should appear requisite first to introduce it

* From this expression it must not be inferred that mathematics are admitted to be of no practical utility ; it would require a volume to enumerate the improvements they have induced in all the arts of life.

along with metaphysics, into our Universities. The Scotch seem to have cultivated such studies to the exclusion of all others, and whilst we cannot enumerate a single modern author of merit, they have a whole galaxy in Reid, Dugald Stewart, Brown, Macintosh, &c. In Ireland, also, these studies form a considerable portion of the college course. I should however apprehend that a closer study of Latin, Greek, and mathematics would be much more conducive to the forming of correct scholars and sound reasoners. Men are launched into the wide abyss of metaphysics without sufficient central attraction and stability to guide them securely through its voidless domains.

It is allowed that in Oxford and Cambridge many professors have no duties, or that the lectures are mere matters of form, devoid of all intellectual interest, something like the keeping an Act,—but what was the necessity for establishing similar paradoxes in London? The answer may be, that the laws or existence of the science may be real, although an ignorant professor may have no audience, or that education must become more general and more refined before such studies can be appreciated. More must be done in youth, and less haste required in the Universities. Common men cannot comprehend such studies at railroad speed; a prior course must be gone through.

The bad state of our schools has of late years greatly encouraged the practice of home education, and thus perhaps rendered the evil still greater. Many writers on this subject, by attributing to it every possible and probable advantage, and liberally allowing to schools all the evils that can befal them, have most effectually proved the great superiority of the former over the latter. But if facts and practice were considered, provided the schools were managed with moderate order, and by teachers of some acquirements, they would certainly have the advantage. The origin of these opinions may be traced to the natural tendency that parents have to fancy their own children superior to others, and that under their own care the education will be the most extensively and effectually accomplished. If, however, they would observe and consider the different instances that fall under their own notice, they would find little reason for supposing that they would succeed better than their neighbours. The chief defects of a home education consist in the

want of motives and incitements for exertion. The youth has too small a world to compare himself with to excite emulation. He is ignorant of the capabilities of boys of his own age; he fancies that he fags but effects nothing:

Parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

His puny attempts and exertions are highly flattered and estimated; but when he ought to have attained the learning of an education, he finds himself a child in ideas and less in acquirements. By associating only with his parents or tutor, he acquires one-sided notions, and although he may have the greatest esteem and veneration for them, he may be induced, from a more extended intercourse with the world, to consider that all the parental care and indulgence that was bestowed on him, was nothing more than an injudicious method of indulging the parental affections. The difficulty of finding competent teachers who will submit to be private tutors or to give private lessons, often places the youth under the direction of the most ignorant teachers. There is a chance, also, that the tutor, like Dr. Pangloss, may find it more to his advantage to humour than to rule his pupil.

In the next place, how many enticements and blandishments frequently exist at home which continually draw the mind from study? How many headaches, how many parties, how many friends continually preclude the possibility of diligent application? But in a school conducted by a diligent and talented master, the pupil learns to love and delight in his studies; he becomes diligent and almost conscious of the gradual development and enlargement of his mind. He knows his hours of study, and expects them, and prepares for them. He has no leisure for ennui or discontent. When his studies are finished, the relaxation affords him the indescribable pleasure or satisfaction which can only be experienced by those who are accustomed to make great mental exertion. The tendency of home education is to make youths haughty, proud, and opinionated. He disputes and contests his orders; he will maintain a will of his own, and in many instances he finds a warm advocate for indulgence in the affection of mamma. In a well-conducted school he learns to obey without comment or hesitation. However self-important he may be at first, he quickly discovers that he is

only one of many, and that his fancies or notions can neither be consulted nor considered. He associates with equals, and learns to make a just estimate of himself. His previous ideas are extended and corrected, and rendered more liberal. He learns to respect others and to merit it himself.

If then teachers were well acquainted with the subjects they profess, parents would find very few sound reasons for attempting a home education; but since in England a professor and proficient are by no means synonymous terms, the difficulty of uniting both qualities in the same individual is no trifling impediment to the good intentions of the parent, and too often, after years of anxiety and expence, they have the misfortune to find that their child is equally ignorant and depraved. From dread of the latter, the parent often seeks out a religious school, and discovers eventually that professions of religion are an indifferent substitute for mental qualifications and cultivation. A doating mother places her son at a school noted for personal care and good feeding, and thus at once casts away all care of the intellect. Many parents are misled by recommendations and prospectuses; all parents are not phrenologists or physiognomists, and it requires some knowledge of human character and some degree of learning, to be able at all times to pull away the mask from a hypocritical and ignorant pedagogue, whether he appear in the shape of a saint, a kind man, a clever man, or a cheap man. Every pedagogue, in proportion to his ignorance, holds out greater promises of peculiar advantages in order to entrap thoughtless and injudicious parents, and the mistake is discovered only when too late to be remedied. Such people spare no praises, no flatteries, in order to retain the good opinions of their patrons. Parents are often satisfied and pleased if their advice be patiently heard and their children flattered; but a gentleman of sound education will neither condescend to the one nor the other. From this cause, indulgent parents are frequently offended with what they consider the hauteur of a talented man, and his incapacity to appreciate the talents of their child, and consequently prefer as a teacher the knave who can flatter them, and extol their child as a paragon of accomplishments.

The great impediment, however, to an improvement in education is the difficulty of discriminating between competent and incom-

petent teachers. Legislative influence is requisite, that parents may have some better guide than a man's professions. The only existing criterions of ability are, a class degree at Oxford, or in honours at Cambridge; but for mathematics, the Mathematical Tripos at the latter is the only one. Oxford lays little or no claim to mathematical knowledge, and a poll degree only proves that a man has neither mathematical nor classical attainments. Those criterions of ability, however, are far too expensive for the generality of teachers, and many well-qualified men deplore the want of some other certificate which might distinguish them from the mass of ignorant and illiterate persons that disgrace and degrade the profession. What criterion, then, can be devised? Not a Scotch D.D. nor a Cambridge D.C.L.: those are degrees for cash, not for learning.

We must go to the source from which Lord Brougham derived the substance for his ridiculous and unconstitutional proposition on education, and the desideratum appears at once. Competent persons must be appointed, whose duty it shall be to examine candidates for the scholastic profession, and to give certificates of the subjects in which they find them capable of giving instructions. Such examiners* might go round a district twice a year; the certificates might be charged with a trifling stamp duty, which would reimburse the treasury for the salaries of such examiners. It ought then to be made punishable with fine or imprisonment, for any one to teach without such a licence, excepting for graduates in honours of English Universities. As in France also, this kind of criterion ought to be extended to females, and as we have no universities for them, the examination should be strictly enforced upon all who undertake the instruction of children. Many

* Some years ago, in 1834 or 1835, certain persons were employed by Government, to take an account of all the schools in England. I believe no general report ever appeared; and in regard to the schools for the middle classes, if from one sample I might judge of the rest, the persons employed were in no manner competent to make the necessary inquiries, or to form a just estimate of such establishments; they satisfied themselves with asking what was professed to be taught, neither visited the school-rooms, or saw the books which were in use. If they had been competent to perform the duty imposed on them, they would not have been satisfied with such unsatisfactory statistics. They ought to have had some authority for their inquiries, and to have obtained strict and accurate accounts of the books in use, the proficiency of the pupils, and the acquirements of the teacher; all of which might have been done in one school, in a few minutes. Such examiners would not be desirable or useful for granting certificates.

individuals of both sexes might be injured by the enaction of such a criterion; but they would have the noble consolation of reflecting, that they suffered for the good of their country. Such a measure would be hailed by all the competent members of the scholastic profession, as the greatest benefit the legislature could bestow. Education would immediately become vigorous and progressive, and very few years would suffice to render us one of the most educated of nations. There is no national deficiency of intellect; it is only the national care of it, that is wanted. Can then there be found no influential advocate of such a measure? Can no member of Parliament condescend to give his attention to such a little affair? Can no real patriot discover in such a measure, the true germ of parliamentary reform? Will none of those gentlemen, who consult so much on the state of the head and the brain, deign to inspect the bowels? May not the derangement of the one be owing to the neglected and disordered state of the other? If such an enactment did not ameliorate the state of the existing body of representatives, might it not have a tendency to provide something more intellectual for the future? Could not Lord R———, by adopting this measure, most effectually attain his purification of the Universities?

Could not Lord Brougham deign to promote such a measure, and thus obviate the necessity for such sweeping changes, as were contemplated in his Bill? The reward of the labour will be the gratitude of all posterity. Provide for the education of the middle ranks, who are the most deficient both in kind and quantity. It is already being gradually extended to the poorer classes, in a manner that is best adapted to the developing of their moral and intellectual qualities. Great changes and innovations are dangerous. Carry this plan, and there will be no occasion for hunting after systems of national instruction. Let us do something which is rational and suited to our own social condition. Clever teachers are never at a loss for system. English parents would consider it an infringement of their liberty, to be obliged to send their children to a union school like a pauper to a union workhouse. Let them have proofs of the capabilities of teachers, and they will prefer an individual of their own choosing. The systems of France and Germany may suit very well there; but let us have only that

part which is suitable to English manners and English habits. If parents will weigh and consider this method of obtaining a measure of the acquirements of teachers, they will find in it very sound reasons for supposing that it would have the desired effect, and I trust that they will exert themselves to bring it into force. If the daily press can discover any prospect of salutary effects in such a measure, let them enforce it by their daily thunders, and let them draw the attention of the nation at large to the subject. Let all competent teachers every where canvass its adoption. Let those worthy individuals, who are continually exerting themselves to extend the benefits of education to the poorer classes, give this also their support, and they will, in a few years, gain a large body of active and effective co-operators. Extensive organizations and impositions of government influence, are not congenial to English habits. Every thing with us is done by the united efforts of individuals. Education can be carried on in the same manner, but the legislature must afford protection against imposition.

In Law, Medicine, Surgery, no one is legally allowed to practise without a licence. Is then education of so little importance that any one may practise it, provided he can make parents his dupes? It ought not to be. But what is the character of the majority of private schools? Are not their principals devoid of all claims to education? Are not provincial English and bad caligraphy their only accomplishments? Have they any pretensions of capability for discharging the important duties they undertake, except impudence and chicanery? Is not then the consequent non-performance of their duties both a private and public injury? Let the law sweep away all quack teachers, and education will then become a legitimate and respectable profession. That will be the first step to a general improvement, and when that is effected, there will be a chance for effecting other extensive improvements. Attention may then be directed to the manner in which men of acknowledged talents, conduct the edueation of their pupils. Without seeking after foreign systems, we shall be able to devise methods of our own. In education the teacher is of far more importance than the system.

There are many men in the possession of the greatest attainments, and of the strictest integrity, and to some of them I would

say, that there are some parts of your duties, which do not obtain their proper portion of attention. When you have diligently superintended the literary labours of your pupils, then you ought not to neglect the forming of their moral and religious character. This cannot be effected by precept, but by example. If you gain the confidence and esteem of your pupils, they will be disposed to make you a pattern for their imitation. Ought you not then to be scrupulously correct, not only in your conduct, but also in your manners? Is is not highly absurd to make a boy translate, with the strictest regard to quantity, good Greek and Latin into bad English, with a provincial dialect?* Will you not acknowledge, that an Englishman who cannot speak correct English, is unfit to be a teacher? Is it not injudicious to make your pupils laugh at vile puns, or to exhibit to them clownish and dirty manners? or to evince a hasty and petulant disposition? Boys are nice discriminators, and quick in detecting any want of impartiality or ebullition of petulance. Is a teacher fit for his duty, that can be made angry by a boy? Talk not of the difficulty of obtaining that self-command, or of your irritability or excitability, for until your have divested yourself of all such weaknesses, you are unfit to be a teacher. Remember the advice of Horace:—

> Ira furor brevis est; animum rege, qui nisi paret
> Imperat—

If correction or punishment become necessary, you should exhibit no symptoms of anger, but only those of sincere and deep regret. Hundreds of teachers are inefficient in the discharge of their duties, from not applying to themselves the instructions that they give to their pupils. Suppose you are irritable, you ought to overcome it. Write a treatise on the subject, and if you find that too difficult, read those that are written. Because you cannot bear with manly

* This remark is intended to apply not to what is called a Latinism or Greecism, but to the using of obsolete or provincial words and such expressions as from there, from thence. Some teachers, also, after the Dublin practice, wish their pupils to translate freely, i. e. to read a line of Greek or Latin, and then to give a kind of paraphase of its meaning. Such practices are highly injurious, especially to boys; the strictest regard ought always to be paid to construing word for word.

calmness the little incidents of life, are your pupils to be wantonly flagellated? Away with such barbarity and ignorance, ignorance of morality, equity and Christianity. It is your own mind that requires the discipline. The pagan Socrates teaches you better rules of conduct. Do you not dread a future retaliation in kind for your wanton cruelty and barbarity? Do not parents, who knowingly commit their children to the care of a man of irritable disposition or weakness of intellect, commit a moral wrong? For precluding other chances and misfortunes, will not a youth assuredly contract something of the irritability which is daily exhibited for his imitation? Is it not one of the primary objects of education, to curb the passions? How then can a man be fit to instruct others, who continually exhibits his ignorance by exhibitions of violent passion? Be assured, that one of the first and indispensable qualifications of a teacher, is a complete equanimity and command of the violent passions.* Amongst your other duties, you must not however forget those of a Christian. You cannot make your pupils pious, you must not attempt it. But can you not impress upon them, a profound respect for religion and religious observances? The most sacred horror of any thing like ridicule or burlesque of religion? Let every thing connected with religion be treated with reverence; never allow it to become a source of discipline or restraint. Teach them to consider the reading of the Bible, as a pleasure and a privilege. Let a chapter be read at morning and evening prayers, with the strictest silence and attention, with no haste or appearance of it. Never use that sacred book for impositions. Thousands of youths are eternally injured by such injudicious punishments. Make not the Sabbath a burden to them, if you wish to instil a love of religion; you may make them hypocrites, but you cannot make them religious by coercion and constraint. When all this is done, you have still to study and observe the dispositions of your pupils, to curb petty ebullitions of anger and resentment, to recommend habits of generosity and kind-

* A cold and phlegmatic disposition is not desirable in a teacher, for their very disposition unfits them to become able teachers. A boy of quick intellect becomes fatigued and listless, while waiting their tardy illucidations. It is also generally acknowledged, that persons of such unhappy temperaments, are incapable of appreciating the finer traits of feeling and sentiment.

ness, of veracity and candour, to induce an equanimity of mind by precept and example, to observe their tastes, and guide their occasional reading. Nothing is more advantageous to a youth, than to be led into a proper course of private reading, and nothing depends more on the influence and judgment of the master. All boys will read from persuasion and admonition, and the stock of information and ideas gained from this source are of the utmost value; not only in other respects, but also as an aid to their stricter studies. Historical reading is the most useful, but story books and novels ought never to be countenanced. In all your plans recollect, that the formation of the future man is entrusted to your care. He comes to you a mere block, and you have to draw out and fashion all his capabilities; if it be well done, you confer the highest benefit on the individual, his friends and the public. Like the minister of religion, you have duties that cannot be measured by money; let then your discharge of those duties be performed with the strictest integrity of conduct, and in compliance with the dictates of religion.

In all schools there must be some method of enforcing discipline and order. Flagellation is the least tedious and most efficacious, and generally resorted to by those who are desirous of having little trouble on the subject. Incentives to application and good conduct by means of registers and rewards are found sufficiently effective for diligent boys. Impositions are also an excellent method, and can be made also to conduce to the pupil's improvement. The latter methods may be made, under good management, to supersede all necessity for corporeal punishment, which might however be retained as an alternative for expulsion in the case of a boy being incorrigible under other methods.* Impositions, however, should always be made subservient to the improvement of the pupil, and never contrived so as to be particularly unpleasant to him. They should always be something which he is capable of executing with ease. The custom which prevails in many schools of making boys

* Of all the methods of corporeal punishment, that with a slight cane over the body, seems the least objectionable. The use of the birch is indecent, and the custom of punishing over the hand, is only a relique of the bastinado. But of all others, the habit of striking a boy over the head and pulling his hair, is the most horrid and barbarous; and those who indulge in such habits are generally remarkable for a savage and uncouth demeanour.

write over a word or a sentence five hundred times is barbarous, and cannot be too strongly reprehended.

Discipline must be had, and orders must be obeyed. A clever master can maintain discipline by his influence; an ignorant one cannot effect it by any means. General insubordination is a conclusive proof of the want of capacity and attainments in the principal. The manner and bearing of a master has a great effect. Impositions should not be too long, or their object is defeated, and the pupil becomes disheartened by the length of his labour. Discipline would be more effectually promoted by making a boy learn one hundred lines of poetry than by copying one line a hundred times, because he would be better pleased with the result. Impositions ought to exist as penalties, and be most impartially inflicted. The Bible should never be made a source of imposition, and those men who are in the habit of causing their pupils to copy out long sermons, as penalties for misconduct, ought to be convinced that the plan has a most injurious tendency. In France, corporeal punishment has altogether been proscribed, and as a substitute solitary confinement has been adopted; the practice has also been introduced into England. It appears, however, to be one that admits of great abuse. A confinement would be of little use to a youth of a morbid disposition, but a severe caning is often very useful with such temperaments. A schoolmaster, to be fully effective in his duties, requires to have absolute authority, and the non-corporeal system weakens his authority in the executive department. However sensitive also parents may be in regard to their own children, they are seldom so forbearing in regard to the misconduct of others. We may, I think, allow their judgment to be the more correct in the latter case. We know also the authority for "Spare the rod," and on the whole, I think its entire expulsion from the school-room would have an injurious tendency. The conviction that it can and will eventually be resorted to, frequently induces that obedience and attention in the pupil which obviates the necessity of its application. When it is used sparingly and only as a last resource, the pupils consider its infliction as a disgrace, and the dread of such an occurrence will arouse their utmost caution in conduct and the greatest diligence in their studies. From observing those men who

have rejected the rod, neither their learning nor the practical results of their plans, are likely to gain many converts to their system.

Boys that have been carefully nurtured with their parents, seldom require any constraint at school. Those, on the other hand, who have been neglected or improperly managed, require a strict hand over them before they will consent to be ruled. Every different disposition requires different treatment. Rules may be fixed and adhered to, but none can be devised which may be equally adapted to all dispositions. One pupil will become diligent from an admonition, another will be diligent from previous habits, and another almost incorrigible from the same source. A clever and expert master will moderate his manner and plans to suit all these various characters, but any fixed system must be injurious to some of them. By whatever method it may be attained, discipline must be maintained. A boy must learn to obey, or he will never know how to command. Make up the ingredients as you please, but still he must learn to obey without reply or hesitation.

In concluding my remarks, I wish I could induce both parents and principals of schools to consider and reflect on the comparative value of many subjects which must form part of an education. Masters are frequently embarrassed in their plans, and youths impeded in their studies, from the necessity of complying with the wishes of parents in regard to particular subjects. It must not be understood from this, that parents who are competent to form an opinion upon the requisite course of studies are in the habit of intruding their directions, because experience shows that those only who are incompetent, are accustomed to indulge in such practices. From the minor departments of education being neglected in our public schools, some masters also give an undue proportion of attention to them, not considering that they can scarcely be deemed a portion of education. Wherever boys are drilled into an extraordinary proficiency in writing, geography, and arithmetic, it is a conclusive proof that the more necessary part of training the mind has been neglected.

These studies are rather matter-of-fact, and cannot induce a habit of thinking. Writing is a mere mechanical acquirement, and ease and rapidity in execution and composition are far more useful

than a fine hand. Children should, however, learn to write with ease by the age of six or seven; but this can be attained better by making them copy English on a slate than by entirely adhering to the instructions of the writing master. Who ever heard also of a good classic that could not write sufficiently well? In a course of eight or ten years, a youth who daily writes out half a dozen pages of English, or other language, need have no apprehension respecting his being able to perform the mechanical part of writing. To the age of ten or twelve, however, youths might be allowed to be under the instruction of a writing master, from two to four hours a week. Let boys write as well as they choose, but do not sacrifice them to such a thing. It should have its due attention, but no more. If it had only that, there would be no such things as specimen-books, cyphering-books, or vacation letters. I know that very few masters approve of such things, and that they excuse the practice of it, from what they term the necessity for complying with the foolish and ridiculous fancies of parents. Cannot these parents reason on the subject? Can they not view education as a whole, and not by piecemeal? I know they can—it is only necessary to direct their attention to it, and they will do it. If a boy is intended for an office or an architect, it is necessary that he should be a skilful penman; but cannot that skill be acquired in a few months when he begins to learn planning and draft-work? Arithmetic is nearly allied to writing. It is requisite for a boy to learn how to multiply or divide well, but it is a subject that cannot draw out the reasoning faculties. By devoting an hour a day to the subject, boys will gradually attain a knowledge of the first part of arithmetic. It ought, however, to be always taught in class, and rules for it ought never to be mentioned. A boy easily comprehends the practical part, and he can use books for examples. I should, however, advise that boys should, at the earliest age, be taught to work equations, and at twelve or fourteen be carried through the first part of Hind's Algebra, and then they will be able to run through the whole of the necessary parts of arithmetic in a few days, and they will either fully understand it of themselves, or be able to appreciate the explanations given them. Boys had better not learn fractions at all in arithmetic, except the teacher has some better method

than the books on the subject furnish. Hind works his algebraical fractions very systematically, and the youth should take the same method with arithmetic. Hind's Algebra I have mentioned, because although it is not precisely what is required for boys, it is yet the only one that can be of use. Boys want practice and examples more than principles. They cannot comprehend the latter without the former. Bland's algebraical equation should always go along with Hind, and a youth ought to know the examples in Hind, and to the end of the Binomial Theorem, with all the examples belonging to that part in Hind, by the age of fourteen or fifteen, together with six books of Euclid. Snowball's Trigonometry should then follow with Keith's for examples. I point out these books, because, from inquiries that I have made at numerous schools in different parts of England, I have discovered such things as Bonnycastle's Algebra, and even worse, in use. I have seen also a great variety of new works on mathematics published in different parts of the country, and even by graduates of Cambridge, which evinced astonishing ignorance. My readers will be aware that it is much easier to criticise than write. Hall's Differential Calculus is a very neat book for a boy, and evinces an extraordinary degree of care and judgment in the selection and collocation of his materials. Whewell's or Pratt's Mechanics should also be in every school, together with Hymer's Integral Calculus. Let your pupils become conversant with algebra, and they will easily overcome arithmetic. Reason with parents on the subject, and they will perceive the bad effects of devoting much time to a subject that is properly non-educational. When, however, boys commence learning algebra, they ought to have at least two hours a day devoted to it, and as they progress, the time should be extended.

Geography also, though an indispensable species of knowledge, is one that ought not to require more than two or three hours a week for its portion of attention. School geographies are generally worthless things, and extremely incorrect; and their atlases are still worse. Every school-room ought to be furnished with a set of maps of large size, and Geography ought always to be taught in classes, with an abundance of Gazetteers and Directories at hand to answer any statistical or local question which may occur. Murray's Geo-

graphy, 2 vols. 8vo. is an excellent work of the kind. It can be made the most amusing and interesting of all studies, by an intelligent teacher. The non-teaching it is rather to be blamed than the manner of doing it; but I believe there are still some schools for young ladies, where they adhere to the barbarous custom of committing it to memory. Geography is best learned as an accompaniment to historical reading, by always having a good atlas at hand to trace marches and voyages. The Society's maps will be found very useful and correct, and ought to form a portion of every school library.

French and German ought never to be attempted without competent masters; there are many professors of these languages, who ought to be examined by authority. As however these are living languages, the teacher should, at all times, be able to pronounce them as well as translate them. This is not always the case, for there are teachers of them, who maintain, that the pronunciation is not necessary. The habit of teaching them, by translating only, is highly injudicious; the pupil should continually practise composition in them. Boys ought also, at least twice a week, to be required to produce a composition of their own, in some language, on any subject they may choose, or on an appointed subject, and even the youngest boys should furnish English composition. It is the habit which renders a youth quick in conveying his thoughts to paper.

In order to insure the attention of the pupils, many masters have adopted the method of making hourly changes of studies, in which, it is scarcely necessary to remark, that they have shown great want of judgment; boys can apply themselves, under proper instruction, very diligently to one subject for two or three hours; but with hourly changes they are taken from the subject, before they can bring their minds to bear fully upon it. Many schools, especially for females, in their anxiety to hasten the progress of their pupils, study very long hours, as much as ten or twelve hours a day; not even allowing a remission at breakfast or dinner, but making them listen to one who reads aloud for the benefit of the rest. Is it possible for the attention to be gained for so many hours, or for the energy of either body or mind in children, to endure such

labour and confinement? Do not children, under such treatment, become dull, indolent, and unhealthy? Are not eight hours a day, diligently employed, sufficient to insure the rapid progress of the child, and as long as it is desirable to keep the intellect bent? Are not the worst effects also continually produced, by shutting up in a small room, as many children as it can contain? With eight hours of study, the pupil would have leisure for occasional reading, and although he could not be compelled to read, yet there are other methods of attaining effectually the same end; and that he might have an inducement to read, there should be, in every school, a large collection of the best historical and poetical works, travels, &c. viz. such as Sharon Turner's, and the Pictorial History of England, Mitford's and Thelwall's History of Greece, Niebham's, Hook's and Gibbon's Rome, &c., and at all events, such works as Goldsmith's Greece, Rome, and England, together with Pinnock's, should be consigned to the flames without delay, as being one mass of falsehood, error and misrepresentation. The little histories, issued under the direction of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, are much more useful for children, from being shorter, and containing less falsehood. If masters find their pupils unwilling to read long histories, they may be assured that the fault is with themselves. There are many other subjects in science, which the pupils might be led to study, and among others, music especially; but in all these things, without practising any deception, the pupils must be led and made to believe, that all their extra diligence and application proceeds entirely from themselves. The spirit of emulation will then lead boys to follow the example of a fagging boy, instead, as is too often the case, of deterring him from reading by threats and persecutions.

In many schools there may, at present, be found, what are termed school libraries, of five or six hundred volumes; but which are not worth as many pence, and are, in reality, rather an injury to the pupil than a benefit. What national information can there be in idle story books, such as scenes in America, &c., and in the infinity of ridiculous books got up, as it is termed most justly, to amuse children, for certainly they cannot instruct them? Children are far from being so devoid of mind and intellectual energy as

some writers appear to imagine. If they are introduced to rational and useful books, they quickly contract a distaste for ridiculous stories and bombast. Frequently also these libraries are formed only of odd volumes, and placed more for show than use. There is also a practice among schoolmasters of purchasing worthless books, at a cheap rate, and retailing them to their pupils at the published prices, and very frequently at fifty per cent. above even that. However much some men may fancy themselves justified in such practices by its being the custom, they may, by reflection, convince themselves that in following such customs they are guilty of a most heinous offence. It is not only in the defrauding of the money, but also, in the abuse of trust that the great evil lies. It is understood that you undertake to use your utmost endeavour, in the fullest sense, to educate the child, and yet for the sake of a few shillings or pence, you put into his hands books, which you know to be worthless and useless. Some remarks which I had made on exercise I cut short, by observing, that boys ought, at all times, in their leisure hours, to have free liberty to exercise themselves in active games, and that when they may not show a desire for such exercises, they should be encouraged to practise them. Parents should never be apprehensive of children exerting themselves too much; for if they have free liberty for exercise at all times, they will quickly learn to moderate themselves; and in all cases greater dangers may be apprehended from the want of exercise than the excess of it.

Printed by W. Gilbert, Cannon Street, London.

PREFACE

TO THE TENTH EDITION OF A PAMPHLET ENTITLED

RECENT MEASURES

FOR THE

PROMOTION OF EDUCATION

IN

ENGLAND.

LONDON:
RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.
MDCCCXXXIX

NORMAN AND SKEEN, PRINTERS, MAIDEN LANE, COVENT GARDEN.

PREFACE.

In preceding editions of this pamphlet the following passage occurred immediately after the words "by constant superintendance," p. 55:—"In the "House of Lords the Marquis of Lansdowne ob- "served, 'I said the State should provide for the "'education; I did not say for the spiritual and "'religious education, but for the secular education "'of the people.' The Bishop of Exeter 'was glad "'the Noble Marquis had given that explanation, "'(hear, hear). He assented to the principle.' All "that remains, therefore, is, in providing for the "secular education of the people, to render the pro- "vision such that they shall not be excluded from "its benefits by religious tests. For this purpose it "may be necessary, in particular cases, to admit "some variation from the plans of the National So- "ciety and British and Foreign School Society. "Upon the principle thus elucidated by the discus- "sions in Parliament, we trust that all parties are "now agreed."

This passage, together with the words, "which has "been more fully illustrated in the debates," which occurred in page 55, after the words "one principle," are now omitted, in consequence of the correspondence between Lord John Russell and the Bishop of Exeter, published in these pages.

The passage quoted from the debate is confirmed by the report in the "*Times*" of July 6th, and in the "Mirror of Parliament," July 27th, with the exception of one word, "instruction" for "education."

But in the speech of the Bishop of Exeter subsequently published for circulation, as corrected by his Lordship, and which had not been examined until attention was drawn to it by the Right Reverend Prelate, the conversation assumes a different form. In the speech thus published, the conversation is thus reported: "*The Marquis of Lansdowne*—I said the "State should provide for the education of those who "dissent from the Church; I did not say for their "spiritual and religious education, but for their "secular. *The Bishop of Exeter*—I rejoice to hear "this; I rejoice to have given the Noble Marquis an "opportunity of making this important explanation; "the more important, because it is explanation. My "Lords, the Noble Marquis disclaims the pernicious "principle, that the State may lawfully assist in

" teaching religious doctrines which it believes to be " false."

This parliamentary conversation being now omitted in the pages of this pamphlet, and the context brought together without any other alteration than those stated above, the sense in which the passage omitted was understood, and the reason why it was quoted, may be more apparent. We request the reader's attention to the following exposition of what was intended to be conveyed.

The Committee of Council proposed by their report of the 3rd of June, to apportion the parliamentary grant, chiefly—

1. In aid of Schools connected with the National Society; in which, besides biblical instruction, the doctrines of the Church of England are taught from the catechism and formularies, and in which the ritual of the Church is used.

2. In aid of Schools of the British and Foreign School Society, in which religious instruction is confined to biblical reading.

3. To admit *certain exceptional cases* of Schools not belonging either to the National Society, or to the British and Foreign School Society.

The whole passage was intended to relate only to these exceptional cases; and was quoted as elucidat-

ing the view supposed to be taken by the Marquis of Lansdowne and the Bishop of Exeter in relation to such exceptional cases.

The fact that the Committee of Council intended a large portion of the Parliamentary Grant to be appropriated to Schools in connection with the National Society, is evidence that the Committee recognised the paramount importance of providing for the direct inculcation of the doctrine, and use of the Ritual of the Established Church, as respects children of churchmen. The question under discussion in this particular passage, however, was not the duty of the State, to those within the pale of the Church, nor to the entire body of those without the pale of the Church, but to a fractional part of those without the pale of the Church.

Exeter, October 10, 1839.

My Lord,

On my return to Exeter, I have the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter of the 7th instant, and I thank you for the early answer which you have given to the questions I felt it my duty to propose.

I assent to your Lordship's suggestion, that this question would be more properly addressed to the President of the Council. But the notoriety of his absence from England made it necessary that I should address it to your Lordship, whose name stands in the list of the "Committee on Education" next to that of the Lord President.

Your Lordship having now informed me that you believe the Committee gave a general direction for the circulation of the pamphlet entitled "Recent Measures for the promotion of Education in England," and the cover of a copy of it now before me bearing on its margin a printed notice of its having been sent from the "Committee of Council on Education," as well as being superscribed "On Her Majesty's service," and sealed with the impress of "Privy Council," I cannot but regard the Committee as adopting, and therefore responsible for, the contents of the pamphlet. In consequence, I request your Lordship's attention to a most extraordinary misrepresentation made in it of words spoken by me in the House of Lords on the 5th of July last.

The passage to which I refer, is in pp. 55-6, and I quote it at length to prevent all misapprehension.

"One principle which has been more fully illustrated in the debates, is especially applicable to these cases, viz. that while the Government is most anxious that religious instruction should be united to secular, and will grant all proper facilities for that purpose, the State is peculiarly

charged with the duty of rendering secular instruction accessible to all, and with the improvement of the quality of such secular instruction by assistance from the public funds, and by constant superintendance. In the House of Lords the Marquis of Lansdowne observed, 'I said the state should provide for the education; I did not say for the spiritual and religious education, but for the secular education of the people.'—'The Bishop of Exeter was glad the Noble Marquis had given that explanation. He assented to the principle." Presently afterwards it is said, "Upon the principle thus elucidated by the discussion in Parliament, we trust that all parties are now agreed."

Now the plain and obvious import of this is, that in the discussion of the question in the House of Lords, I assented to the principle, that the duty of the state, in respect to the education of the people, is limited to "rendering secular instruction accessible to all," and to "the improvement of the quality of such secular instruction by assistance from the public funds, and by constant superintendance." But so far is this from being a correct statement, that it is contrary to the whole tenor of the speech delivered by me on that occasion. So manifest, indeed, is the perversion of my very plain meaning, that if it had occurred in an anonymous publication, I must have considered it as wilfully fraudulent. Bearing, however, as it does, the formal and official sanction of the "Committee on Education," I cannot ascribe it to any dishonourable motive; and I willingly impute it to some most strange, and utterly unaccountable misconception. That this is the gentlest description applicable to it, I proceed to satisfy your Lordship by citing a passage from the report of my speech, which I have the honour of enclosing, and which was corrected by myself, immediately after it had been delivered.

At pp. 5, 6, I was dealing with a question proposed to the Bench of Bishops by the Lord President—"Do they think

"that the Church has a right to the education of the people "at large, including that portion of the people, millions in "number, who do not belong to the Church?" My answer was as follows:—"The Church has no right to claim the enforcement of any system of education on the people, or any part of the people, least of all on that part which does not belong to the Church. But, my Lords, the Church has a right to demand of the State—and if the State, as well as the Church, is prepared to do it's duty, that demand will be answered—the Church, I say, has a right to demand of the State the means of *offering* education to all, whether they are members of the Church, or not. God forbid that the Church should have either the power, or the will, to compel any persons, or class of persons, to accept its system of education! But we have a right, my Lords, to demand, that the State, acknowledging the Church to be the true Church, acknowledging it to profess and to teach the true Religion, and thereby implying the duty of the Church to inculcate—aye, and not only to inculcate, but to spread, that blessed truth which it professes; we have a right to demand that the State shall supply the necessary means to enable the Church to discharge its high functions. I ask, then, the Noble Marquis to call on that Government, in which he bears so high a place, to propose to Parliament such a grant, as will enable the Church to educate all within its pale, who need public aid; and to offer to educate all without its pale, who will accept the offer, in that holy religion which the Noble Marquis and his colleagues, and which the State itself, acknowledge to be true; and if true, of course to be alone true. Will the Noble Marquis do this his duty?"

I am not aware that I could have used words more directly contrary to the sentiment ascribed to me in the Committee's pamphlet, even if I had anticipated, and laboured to prevent, the possibility of such a mis-statement.

At pp. 10, 11, of the enclosed, your Lordship will find the

interlocutory remarks between the Lord President and myself, which are more immediately referred to in the pamphlet; and on reading them you will observe, that they relate not to the point stated in the pamphlet, but to one of a very different kind, viz.—whether the State may assist in teaching religious doctrines, which it believes to be false.

Your Lordship will also perceive that I did not assent to the Lord President's principle; but the Lord President assented to mine, and joined me in disclaiming the pernicious principle, that the State may lawfully assist in teaching such doctrines. It is true that he qualified this disclaimer by limiting its operation to England; but this very limitation marks the more strongly the principle of which we were speaking, and which, as your Lordship perceives, is very different from that which is put into our mouths by the Committee's pamphlet.

I regret the absence of the Lord President; for he, I am confident, if he were in England, would confirm the accuracy of my statement; but I venture to refer your Lordship to any Noble Lord who attended to the debate.

Should your Lordship do me the honour of reading the whole of the reported speech, which I now enclose, you will not find a single sentence, which affords any shadow of justification of the passage of which I complain,—but very much which, if I mistake not, your Lordship will think directly contrary to it.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

H. EXETER.

The Right Honourable
The Lord John Russell, &c. &c.

Buckhurst, Oct. 15th, 1839.

My Lord,

I have had the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter of the 10th inst. It certainly appears to me that the writer of the pamphlet has mistaken your Lordship's meaning. He was probably misled by some incorrect report in the newspapers of what took place in the House of Lords. I will take care to suspend for the present any distribution of the pamphlet by the Committee of Privy Council.

I am much obliged to your Lordship for the copy of your Lordship's Speech delivered in the House of Lords upon the 5th of July of the present year—a speech marked by the ability which distinguishes all that proceeds from your Lordship. But I cannot but observe that there are some misconceptions of the design of the Members of the Committee quite as extraordinary as that which your Lordship has pointed out in the pamphlet. But I will not occupy your Lordship's time upon this subject, engaged as you now are in the labours of your diocese. I will therefore content myself with saying, that it has been the main object of the Committee to extend and encourage the religious instruction of the people, but that while they have endeavoured to insist on the instruction of the children of Churchmen in the doctrines of the Church of England, they have not conceived themselves justified in withholding all public aid for the instruction of those children of the poor whose parents conscientiously object to allow their children to be taught the Church Catechism, or to be compelled, as the price of their instruction, to attend divine service in any other than their own places of worship.

I have the honour, &c.

J. RUSSELL.

The Right Rev. the Lord Bishop of Exeter.

Exeter, 16*th October*, 1839.

My Lord,

I request your Lordship to accept my thanks for the letter of the 15th, which I have this day had the honour of receiving. The conclusion of that letter gives me peculiar gratification, as it shews that no practical difficulties need any longer to exist in combining due regard for the duties of the State to the Church, with full security to the rights of conscience in those who dissent from her doctrines, and do not join in her worship. For myself, I have no hesitation in avowing that, in my judgment, it would be wrong to "withhold all public aid for the instruction of those children of the poor, whose parents conscientiously object to allow their children to be taught the Church Catechism, or to be compelled, as the price of their instruction, to attend divine service in other than their own places of worship." I should rejoice to see instituted a conference between the "Committee of the Privy Council on Education" and the Bishops, for the purpose of devising measures to carry into effect your Lordship's very just and moderate principle, and at the same time to give to the Church that public recognition of her being the fit guardian and administratrix of National Education, with which your Lordship's principle can so well be reconciled.

The charge which I have delivered to my Clergy, and which has been announced for publication, has noticed the pamphlet sent forth by the Committee, entitled, "Recent Measures for the Promotion of Public Education in England," and has dealt with its contents as authorized by the Committee. Not only the passages read by me to my Clergy, but also a longer one prepared by me, in which I comment on that pamphlet, will make part of the Charge when published. In truth, your Lordship will perceive that the mere suspension of the circulation of a document which

has already been dispersed so widely and so authoritatively will not remove the necessity of such comments, as I otherwise have thought it my duty to make.

It will give me, however, great pleasure to publish the correspondence which I have had the honour to hold with your Lordship, in my Appendix. It will, I am confident, be read, (especially that part of your Lordship's letter of the 15th, to which I have already referred) with the highest satisfaction by others, whose suffrages are more valuable than mine.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

H. EXETER.

The Right Hon.
The Lord John Russell,
&c. &c. &c.

NATIONAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

A SERMON,

PREACHED AT ST. ANDREW'S, HOLBORN, SUNDAY, MAY 26, 1839,

FOR

ST. PETER'S, SAFFRON-HILL, INFANT-SCHOOL,

BY THE

REV. R. W. DIBDIN, A.M.,

OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A LETTER TO LORD JOHN RUSSELL;

WITH

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING MINUTES OF COUNCIL, AND OBSERVATIONS THEREON.

Published for the Benefit of the Infant School, by

R. HASTINGS, 13, CAREY-STREET, LINCOLN'S INN.

Price 1*s.*

C. BALDWIN, PRINTER, NEW BRIDGE-STREET, LONDON.

TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN RUSSELL,

&c. &c. &c.

My Lord,

I am no "*political parson.*" I am not one of that body of men whom I heard Lord Melbourne, with *looks, gestures, and tones of voice*, not easily to be forgotten, describe as "a class of the community who needed *keeping down* rather than *urging on.*" I do not think this was a correct picture of the clergy, but certainly those who have known me during my ministerial life will bear witness that it noway describes *my* character. I have often been blamed for my indifference, and *marked* avoidance of politics, not only in the pulpit, but also in private conversation; I have been told that I had the duty of a citizen as well as of a clergyman to discharge; and my reply has generally been, "it is better for the clergy to read the Bible than the newspaper." But now, my Lord, I am startled out of my dream of quietism. Silence, in *these times*, and on *certain subjects*, would (to my mind at least) manifest, not spiritual-minded indifference to the politics of this changing world, but strange ignorance and culpable insensibility touching the dangers, the imminent and obvious dangers, to which a part of your political proceedings will expose the happiness, if not the very being, of our country. I allude to your proposed plan for National Education. But before I proceed further allow me to disclaim all intention *directly to accuse you of intending to injure your country.* Nay, I will not even say that you *mean* to undermine the Established Church; though I

confess I find it hard to comprehend how one of ordinary intellect (much more of intellect such as yours) can fail to see the direct tendency which your Education measure has to overthrow the Protestant Church of these dominions. And yet, since you profess to be *attached* to the Church, and disavow any inclination to injure it, I must be guilty of what would otherwise be a great reflection on your understanding. I must endeavour to point out what I am bound to believe you, as a friend to the Church, cannot see to be the *necessary* and, I think, very *plain* consequences of your own measure. Your Lordship knows far better than I do, that no National Establishment of any kind can stand long when the feelings of the people are against it. Nay, more, if any money can be saved by the abolition of an Establishment, the feeling of the people must be strongly *for* it, or it will fall. No royal authority, no laws, could long support such an establishment against the feelings of the country. The royal authority would be, as it very often *has* been, successfully resisted, and the laws upon the subject would be altered. Apply this to the *National Church*. It is not the will of the Sovereign, nor is it the law of the land, which has hitherto kept the Church in its place. It is the will of the nation. I am, as I said before, no politician, but this is a question within the reach of *common sense:* and I lay claim to no more. I repeat, then, the will of the people has hitherto kept the Church in its place. How? Because most men always believed its doctrines, and loved the holy practice it inculcates? By no means. It is simply *by the force of education and habit* that a vast majority of those who are in favour of the National Establishment are so. I wish it were otherwise; but I freely admit that the friends of the Church upon principle form a very decided minority of its supporters. No man who has been actively engaged in a parish can be ignorant of this. From the poorest man who drinks to

excess in a beer-shop, up to the titled aristocrat who lives licentiously in fashionable dissipation, though guilty of sins of no light character, and (by their own confession) quite destitute of anything like real piety, very many may be found who, notwithstanding, think it right to support the Church. Nay, such is the force of habit, that I have more than once been engaged on my way to church in defending its doctrines and constitution against those who (however inconsistently) were constantly in the habit of attending its ordinances. And what *is* it which makes men habitually support a Church from which, in principle, they differ? My Lord, it is *Education*. They were taught when they were boys to believe that the Church was a *right thing*, and that the Church Clergyman was the proper person to teach them religion. This opinion, call it *prejudice* if you will, has grown with their growth, and strengthened with their strength—has kept the Church in its place. It does not lie within my present subject to point out the excellent results which, in millions of instances, have sprung from this *National Church principle*, leading multitudes who first supported the Establishment from prejudice subsequently to examine and believe its doctrines, and then to advocate it *upon principle*. My business now is with the *political* bearing of the question; and though by no means a view congenial with my own feelings, it is one forced upon me by your proposed measure for Education. What *you* propose to do will *entirely prevent in the rising generation that national feeling* of preference for the Established Church, which I contend to be so salutary (nay, indispensable,) for its safety. My Lord, a majority of the present generation are prepossessed in favour of the Church, simply because they have been *taught* to prefer it. But the next generation, if your measure is carried into execution, will have no such predilection; for you propose to teach them, practically, that

it is quite immaterial whether they are Churchmen, Romanists, or Socinians. And the inevitable consequence must be that any thing like national attachment to the Church will speedily expire.

Sagacious persons have long accustomed my ears to the cry of "Church in danger;" but I confess that the great increase of real religion among our clergy and laity led me to hope that the evil might be averted, not by the wisdom of statesmen, but by the overruling of Providence. *Now*, I think I should *really* be guilty of the fanaticism of which I have often been accused, if I suffered my judgment to be blinded by any hopes that our National Church could long survive the blow which your measure is intended to inflict upon it.

I am bound to believe that your Lordship would deplore the downfall of the Church, because you say you are attached to it. I lament, however, that, albeit unintentionally, you are adopting a course hailed with delight by her deadliest enemies. For, whatever your Lordship may *intend*, both the friends and the enemies of the Establishment are pretty generally agreed as to the tendency of your plan.

I might enlarge on the guilt and danger which, as a nation, we shall incur by sanctioning creeds of opposite doctrines. If the Bible be really the revealed truth of God, I need not remind your Lordship that no man can (with God's approbation) countenance both Socinians and Trinitarians. For the Socinian considers the Roman Catholic an idolator for worshipping Jesus Christ as God; while the Roman Catholic denounces the Socinian as no better than a Deist for denying the doctrine of the Trinity. The modern aphorism that "*Religious opinions ought to have nothing to do with political power*," prevents my urging *this* view of the matter. But those who are accustomed to think that a Christian is never placed in *any*

situation, public or private, which exempts him from the influence of his principles, will agree with me that a statesman ought to pause before he commits his country to the principle that *all religious opinions* (*however conflicting*) *ought to be, not merely tolerated* (*I do not object to that*), *but equally encouraged.* But, as I said, the modern estimate of a statesman's Christianity forbids my enlarging on this point. The same modern estimate prevents my expressing any sympathy for the *pain* which it must cause your Lordship, as a conscientious Churchman, to subject the clergy of the (so called) National Church to the distress necessarily attendant upon being fellow-labourers with teachers, whose principles *they*, in common with your Lordship and all Churchmen, are pledged to oppose as "heretical, blasphemous, and idolatrous." Trusting that your Lordship will not think I have said anything inconsistent with Christian courtesy, and hoping that the spirit of *liberality* which is extended to others will lead you to pardon all the defects of this letter,

I remain, my Lord,

Your very humble servant,

R. W. Dibdin.

May 27, 1839.

SERMON.

"I will utter dark sayings of old, which we have heard and known; and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children." Psalm lxxviii. 2.

אפתחה במשלי אביעה חידות מני קדם.

In the Sept.—προβληματα.

If we did not reverence the authority of the Bible, many of us might be disposed to think the resolution of the Psalmist not a very *wise* one. And those who either forget or doubt the authority of God's Word very honestly admit, that they think it wiser to teach children *plain* sayings and not *dark* ones. They think that difficult doctrines ought to be kept back from them. This is man's wisdom, but it is foolishness with God. The Psalmist, therefore, resolved not to hide dark sayings

from children; and he gives his reason for it: God commanded him to do so. "He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born, who should arise and declare them to *their* children, that they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, and keep his commandments." In which passage we see not only the *warrant* for teaching children dark sayings, but also the *practical effect* such teaching is calculated to produce. The passage quoted by the Psalmist is Deut. vi. 7. In which it is plain that we are to understand the word, "*children*" in the ordinary sense of the word; and not as the *men and women* of this generation are said to be the children of their fathers; for look at the internal evidence of the passage which directs parents to teach them (*i. e.* dark sayings) diligently to their children, "speaking of them when thou sittest in thy house." This manifestly describes a parent with his family round about him. And what makes the question beyond the reach of doubt

is, that we find, from undeniable authority, that the "sons till the fifth year remained under the care of the women: they *then* came into the *father's* hands, and were taught not only the arts and duties of life, but were instructed in the Mosaic law, and in all parts of their country's religion." (Deut. vi. 20—25; vii. 19. and xi. 19.) So that children, quite as young as those in your infant school (for which it is my duty this day to plead), were, at that tender age, initiated into all the mysteries of the unity of the Godhead, the use of sacrifices, and the prophecies concerning the Messiah. This was their method of infant education, adopted by the express direction of the Omniscient. We may, I think, without any impropriety, call it "God's scheme of national education." Doctrinal religion, 'special' religion, and not 'general' religion (whatever that may be), was such as the Most High approved; and, consequently, such as pious legislators would inculcate when imparting education to the youth of the land.

Let me here obviate an objection which, unanswered, might prove fatal to my proposed scheme of National Education. It might be objected

that the Divine sanction, which I have claimed for the doctrinal education of young children, evidently relates to the education which a parent is to give his children, and not to what a Sovereign ought to give his people. Without admitting this as true, to the extent to which it might be used, I, notwithstanding, grant it for the sake of argument. It does not affect my proposition, that a national religious education ought to be a doctrinal one; for the point that we *ought* to have a *National Religious Education* is supposed to be *conceded;* and the matter for inquiry is "*What sort* of religious education should it be?" I hope I am understood. It is granted by those against whom I am arguing that we *ought to have a National Religious Education. But it is denied that it ought to be a doctrinal one.* Persons who dissent from the Established Church deny the right of the Ruler to Educate adults in religion; and, as a necessary consequence, they will deny the right of National Religious Education for children.

National Churches and National Religious Education, in any shape, stand or fall together. But in

the present case no question is made on these points. They are conceded; nay, advocated. Having sanctioned religious education, what must the Ruler do next? Assuredly he must decide on the *nature* of this education. And if he is guided by the example of the Psalmist, what ought he to say? "I will utter *dark sayings* of old; which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from our children." But, if man is *not* guided by the example of the Psalmist (who was yet a very holy man), will he say this? I trow not. For instance: any one who followed the example of the Psalmist in teaching the little ones in your infant school, would (*if he believed them himself*) inculcate the doctrines of the Atonement and the Trinity. *Dark sayings they are indeed:* but he would not, on that account, keep them from the children. But if he thought it wiser, more judicious, and more enlightened, to depart from the example of the Psalmist, sanctioned as it *was* by the command of God, *then* he would avoid all "special" doctrines, and teach the dear children—I know not what exactly, but—not the *dark say-*

ings which would save their souls. Such a scheme of national religious education is in a most unusual predicament. Neither Churchman nor Dissenter could support it. The Churchman could not, because it does not enforce the teaching of doctrines; the Dissenter could not, because (he says) it *violates the civil liberty of the subject to inculcate National Religion of any kind.* Nor will it propitiate a conscientious man on either side to say that a toleration, amounting to a patronage, of every kind of religious sentiment will be granted. This addition to the plan, if it were not highly objectionable on other grounds, would still do nothing towards reconciling either Churchman or Dissenter. The one *cannot* sanction a plan which recognises *religion without doctrine;* the other cannot admit the principle of National Religious Education. It seems to me expecting too much from both parties to suppose that they will sanction a system involving principles against which both solemnly protest, merely for the sake of gaining a subsidiary advantage allowed them by the *permission* of doctrinal instruction at stated times. The Churchman might have less difficulty,

with his views of National Religion, in submitting to a plan which, after all, allows him to preach the truth; but a *Dissenter upon principle* meets an effectual and eternal barrier to his consent at the very outset.

You will have perceived, my dear brethren, that my observations have not been altogether without allusion to the proposed scheme for National Education. I seriously assure you, as the Lord liveth—before whom I stand—that I would not venture to touch upon such a subject if I did not believe myself bound, as a patriot, a Christian, and a clergyman, to warn you against it. I can distinctly see in that fearful measure the seeds of our national ruin. Believing, as I do, that all power in heaven and earth is committed unto Christ, I cannot believe that he will suffer us, as a nation, to support with impunity some teachers who deny his divinity, and others who depreciate his atonement by denying its sufficiency.

But, lest I should seem to exaggerate or misrepresent what I would thankfully be convinced is not a dangerous, not to say wicked, scheme to overthrow the National Church, I will read you a part of the

Minutes of the Committee of Council, together with some observations by some able (but to me unknown) hand upon them.—(*See Appendix.*)

Now, my Christian brethren, are you prepared to approve of such a measure as this? Can you, as Christians—as Bible Christians, approve of it? Let me especially address myself to PARENTS. When you are taken away from the evil to come, are you willing that your dear children shall be exposed to such a fearful state of anarchy as this scheme would inevitably produce? Look, I pray you, at the state of the country in the present moment, especially as its aspect affects our National Church, and tell me whether you think this is a time to withhold from it the marked and special favour of such as we would fain see its nursing fathers and nursing mothers? See, I beseech you, with what an unusual, unprecedented accumulation of force the Church is oppressed, both openly and secretly; *assailed without, betrayed within.* It is not enough for the *socialists* shamelessly to defend practices which it *is a shame even to speak of,* but they also vituperate the Church with a degree of literary ability (*whence* obtained is strange to me)

well calculated to charm and ensnare, as it does, the unwary minds of misguided thousands. The Chartists, by no means contemptible either for their physical or mental strength, have ranged their numerous ranks against the Church. The defenders of rigorous abstinence in Temperance Societies, amounting to many thousands, declaim, in no measured terms, against the clergy, and thus assault the Church. The Roman Catholics are spreading, with an almost incredible rapidity, through the land, expecting, in calm exultation, the downfall of the Church. The Dissenters (with the honourable exception of the Methodists) make common cause with all of these, and join the cry "Down with her! down with her, even to the ground!" against the Church. These are our open, avowed opponents. But, oh, more deadly still! there are traitors in the camp. Men well described in the words of a truly pious and learned bishop of our day,—men who "sit in the seat of the Reformers, and speak against the Reformation,"—men who, while AVOWED PAPISTS, are doing all in their power to convince the world that Popery is modernised, and better suited to the intellectual character of the age,—men,

I say, who use the weight of much learning, and apparent sanctity, to influence the minds of the people with a persuasion that the Church is far more like Popery than has hitherto been supposed, —men who rejoice her enemies and dishearten her friends, in this her day of trial and rapid humiliation. *How* is it that *all* parties, whether openly or secretly infidel, whether avowedly or disguisedly Popish, whether in or out of the Church—how is it that all these differing bodies of men should act simultaneously, as if one master spirit secretly ordered their various attacks from different quarters? How comes it to pass that all these forces, so different from each other, should have the appearance of a compact alliance? By what mysterious influence are their weapons—like compass needles in various climates, acting according to the same law—pointed all against the Church? I might, perhaps, *suspect* the power that rules them all, but I will not now *declare* it; nor is it needful; our present inquiry is directed towards effects, and not causes. I am simply asking, since these things are so, whatever be the cause, is it a time to sanction a measure which degrades the Church in the eyes of

the world, and raises her enemies to an unparalleled equality with her, and that, too, at the expense of hiding from your children the dark sayings, the mysterious doctrines which belong unto their peace? Fathers, you who received from your ancestors a *pure and apostolical Church*, are you willing to hand it down to the next generation cruelly impaired, virtually destroyed? Mothers, can you desire that your little ones shall be exposed to the soul-withering influence of those who would teach them to deny the Lord who bought them? Who can tell, when the ban of national disavowal is removed—when the seal of national approbation is affixed, as regards Socinianism and Popery in education—who can tell how many of your sons and daughters may be ensnared and lost by those naturally congenial doctrines? It is the wholesome restraint of our National Church, who has hidden from her children these wickedly dark sayings, that has hitherto kept them from spreading wider. But take away her maternal authority, abolish her dominant right to educate the young, and they will soon learn *to despise all her counsel, and take none of her reproof.*

Say not, with many, that the Church is firmer than ever, her preachers are followed, and her edifices thronged. Her crowded congregations, and her popular preachers, prove nothing of the kind.

The tree whose trunk is nearly severed from its root, may stand and put forth leaves for days and weeks to come, while it is protected from the blast. But remove its shelter: let the winds blow rudely: it will fall. Just so the Church. The State till now has saved it from its foes. Remove the broad shield of secular power protecting her from the intrusion of Infidel Education, and it is lost.

If, then, you love your children, if you feel for those of the poor, oppose, resist, as far as you consistently can, the fatal scheme in agitation. Use every weapon which law and a good conscience allow to hinder its progress and defeat its success. Petition the houses of parliament against the measure; endeavour to awaken and alarm those who seem unaware or insensible to the evil. Every man, every woman, almost every child, may do something in this cause. Nor must I forget, among other means, to solicit your zealous and liberal support of schools where the Redeemer alone

is exalted, and where the principles of our Established Church are acknowledged. It is for such an one that I am now pleading. I trust, dear brethren, I may presume to ask for *a more than usually large collection*, both because my dear brother and fellow-labourer in the Gospel seldom solicits your help, and his arduous labours and constant anxiety in the good work of the ministry claim this thank-offering at your hands.

Let me exhort you, then, while you have time, to do good unto all men, especially unto them that are of the household of faith. Help, while it is day, to educate these little ones, as yet unexposed to the contaminations of heresy, before a night of liberalism and infidelity steal on to hinder, possibly to finish, the good work.

And now, dear children, let me say a word to you at parting. Learn even *now* to know your friends from your enemies. Learn to be *afraid* of those who do not speak often and much about Jesus when they teach you. Be thankful that the dark things—the great doctrines—are not now hidden from you. Learn now to pray to Jesus, that he would put the Holy Spirit in you, so that

you may *know* as well as hear the truth. And may *our great God and Saviour* so bless what you learn to your souls, that you may grow up a wise and understanding people, to the intent that ye may teach the things ye have learned to *your* children, and *they* to generations yet unborn: to the honour and praise of His name, world without end. Amen.

APPENDIX.

Extract from the Minutes of the Committee of Council appointed to superintend the application of any sums voted by Parliament for the purpose of promoting Public Education.

April 13, 1839.

Read, The following Scheme for the future guidance of the Committee, viz.:—

To found a School, in which candidates for the office of Teacher in Schools for the poorer classes may acquire the knowledge necessary to the exercise of their future profession, and may be practised in the most approved methods of religious and moral training and instruction.

This School to include a Model School, in which children of all ages, from three to fourteen, may be taught and trained, in sufficient numbers to form an Infant School, as well as Schools for children above seven.

Religious instruction to be considered as general and special.

Religion to be combined with the whole matter of instruction, and to regulate the entire system of discipline.

Periods to be set apart for such peculiar doctrinal instruction as may be required for the religious training of the children.

To appoint a Chaplain to conduct the religious instruction of children whose parents or guardians belong to the Established Church.

The parent or natural guardian of any other child to be permitted to secure the attendance of the licensed Minister of his

own persuasion, at the period appointed for special religious instruction, in order to give such instruction apart.

To appoint a licensed Minister to give such special religious instruction wherever the number of children in attendance on the Model School belonging to any religious body dissenting from the Established Church, is such as to appear to this Committee to require such special provision.

A portion of every day to be devoted to the reading of the Scriptures in the School, under the general direction of the Committee, and superintendence of the Rector: Roman Catholics, if their parents or guardians require it, to read their own version of the Scriptures, either at the time fixed for reading the Scriptures, or at the hours of special instruction.

To arrange the classes in separate rooms or sections of the same apartment, divided by partitions, so as to enable the simultaneous method to be applied to 40 or 50 children of similar proficiency.

To adopt means to assemble a greater number of children for simultaneous instruction on subjects not so technical as to require a division into classes of 50.

To include instruction in industry as a special department of the moral training of the children.

To give such a character to the matter of instruction in the School as to keep it in close relation with the condition of workmen and servants.

Besides the physical training of the children in various employments, to introduce such exercises during the hours of recreation as will develop their strength and activity.

To render the moral training of the children at all times an object of special solicitude.

NORMAL SCHOOL.

To provide apartments for the residence of the candidate Teachers.

To construct the class-rooms so as to afford the candidate Teachers an opportunity of attending each class in the Model School without distracting the attention of the children or of the teacher.

To provide means for the instruction of the candidate Teachers in the theory of their art, and for furnishing them with whatever knowledge is necessary for success in it.

To appoint a Rector to give lectures on the method and matter of instruction, and on the whole art of training children of the poor; to regulate the reading and exercises of the candidate Teachers, and to examine them; to determine the order in which they may be admitted to the practice of their art in the School, and at length intrusted with the conjoint management of classes, and to superintend their ultimate examination, subject to the rules of this Committee.

The religious instruction of the candidate Teachers to form an essential and prominent element of their studies, and no certificate to be granted unless the authorised religious Teacher have previously attested his confidence in the character, religious knowledge, and zeal of the candidate whose religious instruction he has superintended.

The religious instruction of all candidate Teachers connected with the Established Church to be committed to the Chaplain, and the special religious instruction to be committed (in any case in which a wish to that effect is expressed) to the licensed Minister of the religious persuasion of the candidate Teacher, who is to attend the School at stated periods, to assist and examine the candidate Teachers in their reading on religious subjects, and to afford them spiritual advice.

The candidate Teachers in all other respects to conform to such regulations as respects the entire internal economy of the household as may be issued by the Rector, with the approval of this committee.

To provide accommodation in the Model School for at least 450 children, who should lodge in the household, viz., 120 infants, 200 boys and girls receiving ordinary instruction, and 50 boys and 50 girls receiving superior instruction, and 30 children probably absent from sickness or other causes.

To establish a Day School of 150 or 200 children of all ages and both sexes, in which the candidate Teachers may realise the application of the best methods of instruction, under the limitations and obstructions which must arise in a small village or town Day School.

Grants to Societies.

A grant not exceeding 2,500*l.* to be made to the National Society, and the British and Foreign School Society, for the establishment of their Normal Schools, but no further grant to be made.

Secretary and Inspectors.

To appoint a Secretary.

To appoint Inspectors, not exceeding at first two in number, to carry on an inspection of Schools which have been or may be hereafter aided by grants of public money, and to convey to Conductors and Teachers of Private Schools in different parts of the country, a knowledge of all improvements in the art of teaching, and likewise to report to this Committee the progress made in education from year to year.

Gratuities to Teachers.

To grant gratuities to such Teachers as may appear to deserve encouragement.

Grants for Building Schools.

Not to adhere invariably to the rule which confines Grants to the National Society and the British and Foreign School Society, and not to give the preference in all cases whatever to the School to which the largest proportion is subscribed.

To advance in no case more than one-half of the expense of building a School.

To expend in grants for the building of Schools not more in any one year than 10,000*l.*

Resolved, That, subject to such alterations as experience may hereafter suggest, the foregoing Scheme be approved.

Religion, *in name*, is put in the very front of the new plan. But this is a mere delusion; for we immediately find, that "peculiar *doctrinal* instruction" is only to be given at "periods to be set apart," and is then to be given by such ministers, besides the Chaplain, as shall be agreed to or chosen by the scholars or

their parents! The "general religion," so called, which is to be "combined with the whole matter of instruction," is to be a religion having *no* "peculiar doctrines;" a religion, in short, to which neither Jew, nor Socinian, nor Romanist, nor Infidel, could object! No argument can be needed to show, that a "religion" of this kind must be utterly useless and nugatory; and that, in short, the introduction of the term can have no other effect than to delude and deceive.

A Chaplain is to be appointed for such children as belong to the Church of England. But every other child may be visited by the licensed Minister of his own persuasion; and where such children are sufficiently numerous, such licensed Minister is to receive a permanent appointment in the School. Thus, in the first, or Model School at present projected, with 450 children, there would probably be, besides the Chaplain, a Romish Priest, a Socinian Minister, a Jewish Rabbi, a Baptist or other Dissenting Minister, as permanent Religious teachers; and, in addition to these, as many other "licensed Ministers," of every variety of sect and belief, as the parents of any of the children might choose to introduce. There is nothing whatever to prevent the introduction of any number of such teachers at one and the same time. But whether anything deserving the name of "religious instruction" could be carried on amid such confusion as this, is a question which every man's common sense will answer in the negative.

The next proviso is, if possible, still more alarming. The Scriptures are to be read daily in the School, but Roman Catholic children are to be allowed to use *their own version*. Of course it would be impossible to deny to the Socinians the use of theirs.

Lastly, over the whole School an officer called a "Rector" is to be appointed; who is to "regulate," to "determine," and to "superintend" the entire establishment. But not one syllable is said as to the religious character and qualifications of this individual; who, while the general character of the School must mainly depend upon him, may be a Socinian, a Romanist, or even a disguised Infidel.

Other changes for the worse are also announced. In future it is proposed,

"Not to adhere invariably to the rule which confines Grants to

the National Society, and the British and Foreign School Society, and not to give the preference in all cases whatever to the School to which the largest proportion is subscribed."

According to the rule heretofore observed by the Treasury, the Parliamentary grant was distributed through the channels afforded by the National Society, and the British and Foreign School Society; and the money was given in proportion to the sums voluntarily subscribed. Now, however, both these salutary guarantees are withdrawn, without any reason being assigned, and a power of disposing of the money upon undefined and arbitrary conditions is substituted. Thus, in every way, a disposition is manifested, to withdraw the support of the Government from the efforts of the Church, and even from that education which, as in the British and Foreign School Society, is merely Scriptural; and to establish, in the room of both, a plan which wholly disregards the Constitutional principle of the union of Church and State, and deals with religious truth as a thing uncertain and undefinable. The Scheme now promulgated is wholly irreconcileable with the doctrine of a National Church, and tends to dissolve the connection which has hitherto existed between Christianity and the State. With these convictions, the Committee of the Lay Union have framed the following Petition, which they recommend to the general adoption of the Friends of the Church throughout the Empire.

C. BALDWIN, PRINTER, NEW BRIDGE-STREET, LONDON.

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A

LETTER

TO

THOMAS DYKE ACLAND, ESQ. M.P.

LONDON :
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

A

LETTER

TO

THOMAS DYKE ACLAND, ESQ. M.P.

ON THE

SYSTEM OF EDUCATION,

TO BE ESTABLISHED IN THE

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS FOR THE MIDDLE CLASSES.

BY THE

REV. ROBERT HUSSEY, B.D.

STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD.

Illa autem sapientia, quam principem dixi, rerum est divinarum atque humanarum scientia; in qua continetur Deorum et hominum communitas et societas inter ipsos. Ea si maxima est, (ut est certe,) necesse est, quod a communitate ducatur officium, id esse maximum.

CICERO DE OFFIC. i. 43.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G. F. & J. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL;

& J. H. PARKER, OXFORD.

1839.

A

LETTER,

&c.

Dear Acland,

The conversation which I had with you here some weeks ago was not forgotten by me. Since that I have read a letter, which I understand to be yours, with much interest. In that you ask three questions,—

"1. What is the nature of that education which the Church ought to offer to the middle classes, and which they will accept at her hands?"

"2. What system of education is suited to the formation of wise and zealous teachers, whether of the poor or of the middle classes; and how is such a system of education to be provided?"

To which you add, as a collateral query, this, "How far the ordinary education of the middle classes, and the special education of the schoolmasters, can be combined,—in short, whether the commercial school and the training school ought to be united or distinct?"

Having had more leisure lately than when we met last, I have endeavoured, as you requested me, to put my thoughts together on these subjects: and the result has been the following suggestions. I have, as you know, been concerned many years with education in different forms, and have had opportunity of observing both the good and the evil of some systems: and I should be very glad if my experience could enable me to give any hints useful for that scheme of education which you and others are now so ably promoting in the country, with the approbation of all good men. For I am sensible of the great importance of the undertaking in which you are engaged, and feel deep interest in the success of it.

The end of all education may be said, in one sense, to be knowledge. For education consists in teaching and learning, and all teaching and learning is of something to be known: so, far therefore, all education aims at knowledge as an object. And the end of all knowledge is right action. Whichever of these ends we regard, it is plain that religion is the foundation and subject-matter of education. For the highest of all knowledge is the knowledge of God; all other is subordinate and instrumental to this; and the knowledge of God is religion. On the other hand, religion is the only motive which can produce right action.

Religion may be said rather to admit and comprehend all science within itself, than to be a part of the mixed knowledge which a well-cultivated mind possesses. For there is no true proposition in any subject-matter (not in itself evil) in the universe, which does not conduce to the knowledge of Him who is the Author of the universe. But in order that we may make this use of science, it is necessary to avow and act on the principle, that God is the end of all study. For it is not to be supposed that human knowledge will of herself bring all her votaries to God by her own paths: although to the true philosopher it is as plain as the demonstrations of his science, that the ways of philosophy can lead in no other direction. It is therefore necessary, from first to last, to connect all pursuit of knowledge, and therefore all education, with religion; and to begin by laying down religion a the foundation, and the knowledge of God as the end, to which the whole is consecrated. And hence it appears that they who founded places for education, such as those in our Universities and various schools, dedicating them expressly "to the glory of God[1]," took a juster view of the true principles and object of education, and the connexion

[1] This principle runs through all our university system. In Oxford the solemn form of conferring a degree, the reward and proof of scientific attainment, is, "In honorem Domini nostri," &c.

of all science with it, than they do who describe religion (however they commend it in name) as but a part of knowledge, as one of the accomplishments of a well-educated person; as if the improvement of the human mind were the *end*, and the knowledge of God the *means:* whereas the reverse is the truth, that the mind is to be improved in order to learn the will of God.

The same truth is equally clear if we regard right action as the end of education. For there are no means by which men can be *educated* to act morally right, but religion; namely, by learning the motives which revealed religion holds out to regulate actions, and by being trained in habits of action in obedience to those motives, and in religious exercises. Mere morality, whatever be made the foundation of moral obligation, has never yet been found able to bring mankind to habits of right action, and therefore would be quite inefficient for forming the character in complete education. Moreover, even if it could hope ever to succeed in this end, it would be unjust toward those who believe in revealed religion, to attempt to educate them in habits of action from merely moral motives; since it is a duty in them not only to act morally right in general, but to do so also from religious motives: a moral obligation is laid on them to take their motives of action from revelation; *their* morality necessarily includes religion; and conduct which would be right in a

heathen might be wrong in a Christian, if it did not spring from Christian motives.

When it is said that right action[1] is the end of education, it is of course evident that by the term "*right*" is meant, in the first and highest sense, morally right, right as it is required of free agents who will be called to account hereafter, and who are members, not only of a political community, bound by civil ties in this world, but also (as being Christians) of a larger community under one Head, bound by ties which are to last for ever. This is the highest and last end: but under this are comprehended and included all degrees of action which are in any sense truly right; all of which may be, and must be so far as they can, considered as objects of education, and provided for in a perfect system, being all subordinate to the highest end. These might embrace not only civil duties arising from political obligations, but also every kind of knowledge, art, or accomplishment, useful to society, or to individuals if not hurtful to society. Thus it appears that a system of education founded on these principles, namely, that religion is the ground-work of the whole, does not exclude any branch of study, but admits quite as much as that

[1] Observe, that "right action" includes the operations of the mind. What Bishop Butler calls "mental acts" are as much actions as any thing else that man does.

which makes the end to be universal knowledge; only it assigns to each its proper place.

Some may think these abstract principles mere theory, and of little use at present; but you know well that practical questions turn on them, and you cannot but perceive, that you will have to determine some such questions at the very outset, in the system of education for the middle and lower classes, which you are now promoting.

For already it has been complained, that religion, as it is taught in our national schools, is useless, and something more useful is asked for in place of it. This indeed will be the problem which must be solved, what is "*useful*" in education? On the principles laid down above, that only is useful which conduces to the proper end and object of education. But different standards will be taken by different persons, according to the degree in which their own minds are cultivated, and their moral judgment formed. It is not surprising that agricultural labourers should think that other things are better worth learning than religion, that they should ask to have the time which their children spend at schools "devoted to useful general instruction," and say that they could "teach them *enough* religion at home," (which means that their children could learn enough of it without being taught,) for many persons measure the worth of a

thing by what it will fetch in the market only, and a knowledge of the Bible is not so marketable a commodity as many other things that might be learnt [1]. But it is surprising that educated persons should adopt the sentiments of agricultural labourers on this point [2]. It must however be admitted that not all persons are capable of judging what is really useful in education: to do this rightly requires a knowledge of the real nature of education, and of the ultimate effects of each thing taught

[1] Complaint has been made also, that in many parishes children are taught useless things even out of the Bible, namely, "not their duty to God and man," but "such things as the history of Noah, and the names of the principal individuals in the Old and New Testaments." It would be a curious and instructive comment on the text of Scripture, if they who think so would strike out all the *useless parts* from the sacred volume. If the history of Noah is useless, there seems no reason why there can be more use in the history of Abraham, or of Adam, or indeed of any other person. Again, if "the names of the principal individuals" are useless both in the Old and the New Testament, we might farther get rid of all mention of St. Matthew and the other Evangelists, and St. Paul and the twelve other Apostles—need we add any other name which might be got rid of also among the "principal individuals?"

[2] Complaints of this kind from those who cannot understand the object of learning certain things in a course of education, are no novelty. I remember that dull boys at school who found great difficulty in doing their exercises, would often ask, indignantly, "what *can* be the use of learning to write Latin verses?"

on the character of the learner. There is no doubt that all persons are inclined to take narrow views of the subject, and limit their idea of utility within the bounds of their own experience or ordinary wants, unless corrected by reflection, and taught by reason and observation to enlarge their notions.

This is the difficulty which will meet you, as soon as you have opened Diocesan schools for the education of the middle classes especially. Parents will desire to have their children taught what they think useful, that is, such things as will get them on in life, all marketable accomplishments ; and, like the labourers above quoted, will think time spent on other things only wasted. You, on the contrary, will endeavour to have a system which will produce the best character on the whole, giving the first place to principles and moral habits, the last to knowledge. In short, the parties interested will be ever tending towards a desire for mere *professional instruction*, you will endeavour to give *general education*. And if your schools are to support themselves, as they must do if they are to stand at all, you must provide for this emergency. It seems to me that there is no doubt which of the two sides you must take, namely, that you must maintain your own ground, and avow that your schools will not give professional instruction, but general education. For this is the only safe principle. If you take the other side, your whole sys-

tem will depend on the caprice of the public taste, and you *must* teach what there is a demand for, and no more: whereas if you set out on the other principle of giving general education, a judiciously planned system may admit to an indefinite extent all those branches of knowledge which are desirable, and if well conducted may at last effectually satisfy all reasonable demands.

It is due to the position in which your system now stands, as countenanced and authorized by the chief part of the Church of the Land, both Ministers and People, to take this high ground, and call on those who come to your schools, to confide so much to the judgment of such supporters, as to take the education which they have put forth, in trust that the result will justify the confidence placed in them. And this is the principle on which all our ancient places of education have risen and flourished, not by opening shops for teaching, in order to supply a demand for any science as it arose, but by establishing teachers and systems of teaching which attracted learners. It is, doubtless, right and necessary to consider what sort of system the people, as you express it, "will accept at the hands" of the Church, and to endeavour to make your system acceptable; but it is not right to make the popular demand the rule by which the system is governed. The rule should be, that which will *best educate* those who come under it; and the persons who compose your

Society, and the other Societies of the same kind, have a better right than others, from their station and acquirements, to decide this point. It is but a dishonest expedient for those, *whose business it is to judge* of any matter, to give way to a popular demand against their better judgment; and like all dishonest expedients it brings its own punishment in the end. And with regard to education, there is no reason to fear, that a staunch adherence to sound principles will not succeed at last. For although it may be admitted, that the people at large are not so far good judges of what is the best education, as to be able to determine beforehand what shall be taught and how; and so we have seen and see popular schemes of education rising upon new theories with great praise, flourishing for a short time, and then sinking as quickly as they rose; yet still there is so much good sense and right feeling and reflection in the English people, that a good system of education, well worked out, could not fail to be appreciated; and even if it were opposed at first, it would afterwards make its way good, and gain all the favour it deserved, while more showy systems were neglected: and thus after the trial was made and the different methods were compared, the people would infallibly judge right, and prefer that which was really best. But for this you must *now* perhaps act upon faith, and trust to time and the event for showing the truth.

But it is time to consider your questions more in detail: although what has been said is a kind of answer to the first of them. I will discuss your third question first, because the answer of the others hangs in some degree on this. You ask, "how far the ordinary education of the middle classes, and the special education of the school-masters, can be combined?—in short whether the commercial school and the training school ought to be united or distinct?"

It seems to me that the best and most perfect system, for many reasons, will be to join these two schools, or rather to have but one school for both.

As far as I can understand the proposed plans, it seems that the training schools, if established separate from the others, must be filled either (1) by boys whose parents have by choice designed them for the profession of school-masters, and sent them to be educated for it, or else (2) by boys whom the governors of the parochial schools have marked out as fitted by ability and character to be educated for school-masters, and sent accordingly, by such means as they could find, to finish their education at the training school.

Now on this, first of all, the doubt arises, whether such sources will *fill* the training schools? How many scholars will be thus sent every four years? for we will suppose that four years will be the average time that each scholar would stay in the school, and con-

sequently that the schools would empty themselves every four years. And if there is not a *considerable* number of scholars, there can hardly be an efficient system of education; for the best system that could be framed would not work well with empty classes.

But let this pass. Suppose that the schools are full enough for the system of teaching to come into operation. Even if you have scholars enough for carrying on the school at present, surely these will not have been chosen in the best possible manner for the purpose for which they are designed,—in the manner, that is to say, most likely to get the ablest teachers hereafter. For if you receive into your training schools all who apply for admission, which you must do, if you open these schools with the intention that they should support themselves; you will make the parents the judges of the qualifications of the scholars to be trained for masters, and they of course must be influenced by many other things more than the natural fitness of the child, so that in fact there would generally be no selection at all: indeed, even if you supposed that parents endeavoured to send those children only who seemed to them qualified by nature to make good schoolmasters, it would be difficult for them to ascertain this point so early as they would have to decide on the course of education which they should follow; and after all, parents would generally not be the best judges of the qualifications of their children

for such duties. Thus if your training school be supplied with scholars by the public, like other schools, it will be so far quite chance whether those whom you train there for masters are in any way qualified by talents or disposition for it. Neither could you correct this, by using a discretionary power in the sending out and appointing as masters those who had come to the training school to be educated, refusing nominations or recommendations as you thought fit: for it is obvious that few would come and undergo the comparatively long process of the training school, if at last it was very uncertain whether they would reap any fruit from it, because the authorities of the school would not sanction their being employed as school-masters.

If you have scholars sent from the parochial schools, they indeed will be chosen, and probably well chosen by fit judges, after sufficient trial: but these are likely to be but few in number: indeed they must be the smaller part of the school, because they will be persons who cannot keep themselves and pay for their own education, but will form the class in the education of which the funds of the Society are intended (as I understand) to be partly spent; and therefore they alone cannot support the training school.

Now if, on the contrary, the training and the commercial school be joined together, you have at once (if the plan succeed at all,) a school of con-

siderable *size:* which is a great advantage for constructing and working *any* system. Each class of scholars will be benefited by the presence of the other: those trained will gain a better knowledge of the nature of Education by having seen many educated with themselves. And the others will be excited to exert themselves, and improved, by intercourse and competition with a body of scholars educated to a higher standard of attainments and character than themselves. Moreover, which is of most importance, by having but one school for all, you may have those who are to be trained as masters *chosen out of the others*, by yourselves and your own teachers. By this plan you might have a large central school in active operation filled chiefly from the middle classes, giving a good general education, and then the masters and teachers constantly choosing out of the whole school those boys whom after the experience of a year or two they judged most promising, and drafting them off into the higher classes, where they would be trained especially as future masters. This would be a *selection* of the kind most likely to ensure having the best subjects brought up to be masters. And at the same time this method would be a means of keeping up the character of the school as a general place of Education, by the importance it would give to the whole establishment, and the high standard of attainments required.

In short, there is no reason why the school should not be established on the same principle as our foundation schools: the commercial part of it would correspond to the "oppidani" or independent members, the training part to the foundation: and the latter might be filled up from the former, by taking off the best boys who would be willing to enter the profession of school-masters: and to them might be given such exhibitions or assistance as should be founded in the system, to maintain them during the additional time spent in the training part of Education [1].

This scheme supposes, that the course of education given is materially the same for the middle class generally as for those trained to be masters: nor does there seem to be any reason why they should be different, until you come to the later

[1] If it be said against this, that it is a slow process, that it would need a long time to breed up efficient masters, whereas we want to do something *now*, I answer, it would take no more time than any other plan. If you found *separate* training schools, you must educate there until the persons are of a certain age; if you have but one joint school, you may make them fit by the same age. The only difference is, that in a separate training school they would pass all their time in training professedly for masters; in a joint school they would pass a part of the *same space* of time under the general system of the school, and only the remainder of it in training professedly as masters. In both cases the same number of years would be needed to produce *a breed* of masters such as you want.

stages of preparation for the duties of teaching, given to the latter of the two. For the best preparation for a master is simply, at first, the best education; right principles, clear perception of duties, moral habits generally, knowledge of various subjects, are no otherwise taught or to be acquired in the case of the future master than in that of any other person. Some necessary qualities are not to be taught at all, but gained by practice in acting upon common principles learnt before, as firmness, patience, good temper in governing. Some cannot be learnt very early, as knowledge of human nature. Those which seem most properly the subjects of a training system may be easily taught *after* a course of general education in common with other boys, such as knowledge of some other subjects than those taught in common, *technical* knowledge of all the subjects taught, habits of thinking and speaking with precision and clearness. These are reasons why there is no need of setting up separate training schools, because joint schools would answer your purpose as well or better. Certainly *better*, if it should ever happen that the training schools were overdone, and tended to breed system-mongers and machinery-men, instead of judicious teachers. For after all, boys are not machines, and the best *theory* of teaching will fail, unless it be first founded on a just knowledge of human nature, and afterwards applied with a knowledge of human nature.

It is not commonly thought that training schools are wanted for the masters of our classical schools, nor training colleges for tutors; the best training here is the best education: the general course of education gives the principles and the knowledge required; and experience of the system under which he has been educated gives each man the means of carrying out that, or other systems afterwards. So it might be with the future masters of the commercial and national schools. Provide them with good general schools to educate them and form their characters aright, and add to these such helps as may enable them to prolong and improve that education to the higher degree required for their profession, and it seems that nothing more would be wanted to produce and preserve a race of such men as the country wants for teachers [1].

I have now given you my opinion in answer to your third question, about the separation or union of the two kinds of school. Your other two ques-

[1] You will of course understand that I suppose throughout, that the system of education in these general schools is built on sound principles, that is to say, on the principles laid down by your Society. If the effect of joining the general school and the training school in one, be to lower the quality of the education given, to the popular standard, in order to suit the popular taste, because the maintenance of the school depends on the popularity of it, the union will do more harm than good. But I have already given you my opinion on this point. See p. 10, &c.

tions, "What is to be the system of education for the middle classes? and what for the teachers?" I will treat as one, considering them together. For if the same school be destined both to educate the middle classes in general, and also to train teachers, there will be in the main but one system of education. I will not pretend to do more than throw out some hints on this subject: it is one of large extent, and open to much discussion. It is easy to theorize about it, but difficult to define, as the way is hard to find in a plain either untrodden, or trodden in many directions.

The first thing to be thought of is, the mode of teaching religion, on which I will offer but a few remarks. The reading of the Bible should be so managed, that the boys might always regard the book with different feelings from all others, as something more than a mere school-book which is the subject of their lessons. You will understand what this means, by looking at some of our national schools. In them the Bible is almost the only text-book for constant study; and they who are practically acquainted with the boys in them know what the effect of this is. Clever boys of fifteen or more, as quick as constant competition can make them, who have read most parts of the Bible over often, know the text almost as perfectly as the multiplication table; but unhappily they often repeat it with as little sense of the meaning, as they would the

multiplication table. The sound of a word will recall text after text, where a similar sound occurs, and passages of the deepest import are rattled off mechanically without thought. Now this does not teach religion, although it be knowledge of the Bible. To prevent this effect, the Bible should be read only with the character of an authoritative rule by precept and example; not as a school lesson merely. How often the Bible should be read in the school work, is a question depending in great degree on the nature of the other things done in the week. Certainly, a well-educated Christian ought to know more of the Bible than of any other book [1]: and

[1] It has been sometimes said, that the English are the worst educated people in Europe. Which assertion I believe to be as near to the truth as one end of the diameter is to the other, if any right standard of education be taken to judge by: and I think the history of Europe, for the last fifty years, has proved the English character, which is in all cases the result of education, not to be inferior to that of any nation. At the same time, if you can estimate the value of different kinds of ignorance, I would much rather have the mass of the population well acquainted with the Bible, and ignorant of most other things, than the converse; although knowledge of the Bible ought not to exclude other knowledge. A very excellent specimen of a poor cottager, in Kent, used to speak of the times of the Romans, of which she had read, when there was an emperor in every shire. A parish clerk, in an Oxfordshire village, declared that a Norman arch in his church was a *Roman* arch; and in proof of it triumphantly pointed to a Latin inscription on a brass plate, which he was sure was *Roman*. This is *English* ignorance! At Frankfort,

this knowledge should begin early in life. The Gospels should be read more at first than the Old Testament, because the former have more in them suited to make an impression on children, if for no other reason. Of course the Bible must be explained by the master, otherwise it cannot be understood: but care must be taken that he does not turn his teaching into theological lectures. One most useful kind of teaching, is the habit of applying every narrative by way of example to their own conduct, teaching them to compare themselves with what they read. This the youngest readers will understand: and this *is* teaching religion.

For Christian doctrine, let our authorized formularies be used, as interpreters of Scripture designed for the very purpose now in hand. But the Catechism must be *really* explained, not learnt only. One mode of explaining it is by comparing it with the Liturgy: as for instance,—explaining the doctrine of baptism from the baptismal service, and so on. Let also that admirable book, now so unaccountably neglected, the Homilies, be constantly

a well-dressed person, who looked like a decent tradesman, once asked me what was the subject of a painting of Boaz and Ruth; when the explanation given was quite unintelligible to him, he was told at last that it was a story from the Bible, on which he replied, "Oh then they are saints, I suppose," and went away contented. There is no doubt which of these kinds of ignorance is preferable.

used for teaching doctrine: for here sound doctrine is set forth with the greatest clearness in pure and impressive English, exactly in the style and manner which you want, that is, for the use and understanding of persons not learned, and, what is most important, it is the *authoritative teaching of the Church of England*, sanctioned in precisely the same form and degree as her articles. If this book had been more used than it has been for the last half century, perhaps there would not have been so many diversities of doctrine delivered in our Church, all claiming to be correct statements of her real doctrine. The Liturgy also will be one means of teaching doctrine: the services may be explained, so as at the same time to teach how to use them aright, and also to convey a knowledge of many articles of the Christian faith. Had this been more common some years ago in the schools for the middling and lower (and, perhaps, also the upper) classes, it is probable there would have been less dissent than there now is.

One other mode of teaching religion must by no means be forgotten: that is—prayer. I need hardly say that each day's business, in a Christian system of education, ought to begin and end with prayer.

I need scarcely say any thing about the mathematical part of education. The use, or even necessity of this is so generally acknowledged, that a prominent place, of course, would be given to it in

any system. I would suggest only one thing; that you teach *principles* in preference to *practice*, or at least before the practice. I mean, that you teach arithmetic rather than book-keeping; geometry, rather than mensuration; trigonometry, rather than surveying; dynamics, rather than engineering; although the learners themselves generally, and parents often, desire the contrary to this. For if the scientific principles be learnt, the practice follows easily; and he who knows these may go farther in the science if he likes. But the practice without the principle, although often just as good for the mere man of business, is but shooting in the dark in reality. Perhaps a writing-master, who teaches the rule of three, may not know what a proportion is; or a surveyor, who measures by triangulation, may not know *why* the opposite sides are inversely as the sines of the opposite angles.

This branch of education is no doubt indispensable; for number and magnitude pervade all the universe, and there can be no accurate knowledge of any part of matter without them. Another branch also indispensable is language, the universal vehicle of thought, and means of preserving truth. No system of education is complete which does not contain some method of teaching the principles of language, or what may be called a philological basis. For accuracy and correctness of speech are not acquired (in general) without instruction; but without

correctness of speech there can be no certainty in communicating knowledge to others; and incorrectness of speech seldom fails to produce confusion of thought in the speakers; for our minds are much more governed by words than we are willing to allow. The principles of language are the same universally, so that learning them in one is learning them for all: and hence it is, that in classical education the languages first learnt grammatically take a very long time to learn, because in them the universal principles must be acquired; but others which are studied afterwards are soon mastered. It will be enough, therefore, to have one language taught theoretically. But *what* language? There are obvious reasons why English is not the best. It is very irregular in every part, and inconsistent with itself; and inferior in point of construction to some others. There is not yet any good English grammar fit to teach *that*, for learning which the study of languages is to be introduced into our system. Very little more labour than would be needed for learning English grammatically, would serve to teach Latin, if Latin were thought desirable in itself. Now if we allow ourselves to connect these schools in idea with the National Schools, think of them as designed at all for the same class of persons, or rank them under the same kind of school, (as perhaps some are unthinkingly inclined to do,) it is clearly absurd to introduce Latin. But it is a great

mistake so to conceive of them; and they can hardly be set on any thing like a proper footing, if they are in any degree confounded with the National Schools. They ought to be schools fitted for all who can pay for their own education, from the poorest of that class, up to those who are only just below a classical education. It is beyond dispute, that many in this class would find a knowledge of Latin beneficial. If it were not useful to them in their business, as it would be to many, at least they would be capable of benefit from that additional means of gaining information; and no doubt this accomplishment would be valued, and bring respect to those who possessed it from those who did not. *You* know that a desire to have this included in the system, and a decided opinion of the estimation in which it is held, has been strongly expressed in the class of tradesmen, in one instance at least. I think, therefore, that Latin should be taught in your schools; if not to all, at least to all who wish for it [1]. It was precisely for this purpose that many of the old grammar schools were founded throughout the country, which now, unhappily, have from various causes fallen to decay. If these had been only

[1] Latin is taught to this class in Ireland; but to what extent, or in what manner, I do not know. I have met with the keeper of a public house, of a very low class, who could read a Latin inscription on a tomb-stone, which he did with a foreign pronunciation.

increased, by adding to the original foundation the means of teaching such other branches of knowledge as were needed from time to time, they might have been exactly what are now wanted,—good schools for that class who want something better than the education of a day labourer, and have not means to send their children far away to universities, nor to hire tutors at home. And at the present time surely they *ought* to be restored to their original purpose, and might be made very useful for the scheme which you have in hand. For here you have the groundwork already prepared. The old foundation would be the means of maintaining a person qualified to manage all the classical, moral, and religious part of the system; if you add to this teachers for the other departments, the machinery is at once complete.

Latin then should be the basis of teaching grammar and the principles of language: but at the same time the English tongue should be by no means neglected, although not taught grammatically [1]. Besides reading, English should be taught to the upper boys, by means of composition in writing exercises. I would suggest also another plan:

[1] It is plain that the grammar of Latin would teach that of English. Conjugating a verb, "*habuissem*, I might have had," for instance, would teach the inflexions of the English verb just as well as learning English grammar, as I have seen done in a National School, where a whole class were repeating a complex

that is, not reading only, but also learning by heart and repeating English, and especially English poetry. It is surprising that so little use, or rather no use, is made of all that great mass which we have of English poetry in education. It is strange that a man may have passed through the best education given in the country, and never have been led but by accident, or his own taste, to read any one English poet. It is true, that there is much of the English poetry which should be carefully kept away from young persons, if it ought to be studied by any: but there is a great deal which might safely and profitably form part of the reading of their education. It is well known how much effect poetry has on forming the taste, and feelings, and character of people, especially when the influence of it is exerted on an early age; how much character is given to children by nursery songs and rhymes, how much by ballads, and other poems, a little later; in short by all poetry, during that time of life when the imagination is active and the feelings easily moved, before the judgment is matured. If, then, any poetry could be found that would give a proper tone to the character, by filling the mind with good images, and exercising the

form of combined inflexions of tenses of verbs; in which I must confess I doubted whether the time was well spent. In the same way, construing a sentence of Latin, would teach the principles of English construction, beside the knowledge gained throughout by comparison.

feelings by right impressions, surely it would be wise to make use of so powerful an instrument in education. Who is there that does not remember the emotions awakened by poetry in his early years, and look back with pleasure on that healthy excitement of mind, by which his feelings were taught to exert themselves aright, as the bodily powers are trained by exercise of the body? How great are the delights, and how salutary the effect of the boyish ardour for honourable and lovely objects, which good poetry inspires! It is a great mistake to think that education is designed only to make perfect reflecting machines, although it is most true, that there can be nothing done rightly without reflection; but the feelings are part of our moral nature, intended to give an impulse to action; and they must be cultivated by teaching. Children must be taught to feel aright, by having right objects set before them, and having their feelings called forth towards them in the proper manner and degree.

By this means they will be trained early to love what is good and hate what is evil, and will have chosen their part before they are called on to act: they will come into the world with their hearts already enlisted on one side, the partizans of all that is good and amiable. And this is to be done in part by the use of poetry: poetry is the language of feeling; and speaks to the feelings: and he who

often uses this language, learns to feel thus himself. The feelings indeed may be abused, or over-excited, or misdirected by bad poetry, (bad, I mean, in spirit and sentiment, not in composition:) and such would be mischievous and should not be admitted to be read by children, such as much of Lord Byron's is, and others which I need not name: but the abuse proves what use might be made of it for good, if properly regulated: and there is plenty of good poetry to be found, which would purify as well as excite the feelings.

I would, therefore, propose the introducing of English poetry into your schools as being likely to do good in many ways. First, it would be most powerful in forming the taste and feelings, as has been shown. Next, it would be of service for the purpose mentioned before that, which first led me to speak of it, namely, it would promote the knowledge of the English tongue in the purest form. We might think that a boy who had ever learnt a hundred lines of Spenser by heart in his life, would be safe from most of the common vulgarisms heard in our provinces. Next, it would store the mind with images, and exercise the imagination; thus providing, if not materials for the reason to use in the business of life, at least a fruitful source of rational enjoyment. Next, it would exercise the memory. And this is an important part of education, on which I have not yet touched, but which

calls for an observation or two. For education may be, in one point of view, divided into three parts.—1st. The forming the moral taste and character. 2ndly. The maturing and improving the powers of the mind. 3rdly. The acquiring knowledge. The third is clearly the least important of the three, for it depends on the other two: if the first part is not rightly performed, the others are worth nothing, for powers of mind and knowledge are only the greater means of evil where there is no right moral principle. If the second is not rightly performed, the third cannot lead to any thing, for unless the powers of the mind be well trained, *the man* has no efficient means of getting knowledge. And, moreover, the third part is that in which least is done in education; the whole amount of the actual knowledge[1] gained in education is very little, and not to be compared with that which every well-educated man gains in a very short time (by means of his former education) when he comes to act in life. For these reasons the former two are most important: yet the tendency in the country now is decidedly to take this third part, "*the getting knowledge*," for *the whole of education:* than which there can be no greater mistake, nor any opinion more likely to destroy all good education.

[1] To how much that passes among admiring friends for knowledge does that saying of Aristotle's about young persons apply, "they do not believe it (πιστεύουσι) but repeat it." Ethic. vi. 8.

In the second of these three parts then, one of the most valuable of the powers of the mind is memory: and great part of most of the systems of education in use among us has been bestowed on improving the memory. This is done by learning by heart and repeating: and what is done in the classical schools with the classical poets for the sake of exercising the memory, I contend might well be done in your schools with the English poets. This then is one farther advantage gained by the use of poetry: to which subject I now return again.

Another advantage would be, that it would promote a knowledge of the best part of our English literature; ignorance of which has, sometimes, justly been made a reproach against those whom we consider well educated among us. It would farther be of use, by excluding the trash and nonsense which is often thrown in the way of the young in the form of playhouse songs or worse; which, it may be thought, those who had been used to read any good poetry would nauseate and reject.

I am much pleased to find from your letter, that you had formed the same opinion in favour of the use of English poetry in these schools, that I have here maintained. Perhaps you have already considered all that I have urged for it, beside other reasons of your own [1]. I will suggest one more

[1] One other is, that it is probable boys would *like* such reading. It always seemed to me that selections of poetry (of which

argument from the example of the ancients. The Greeks and the Romans made their own standard poets the universal text-books in their schools. Homer and Hesiod were the foundation of all education at Athens [1]. Virgil and Horace were as well thumbed and begrimed with "fuligo" by the Romans [2], as they could be at any one of our public schools. It is true the Romans read Homer also in their higher schools [3], as the common text-book, just as we do in our classical schools: and therefore perhaps we ought to put aside this case, where the Romans read the Greek poets, as answering more exactly to our classical schools, and therefore not to the point. But the other schools were certainly [4]

there are but few) such as the Elegant Extracts, and Enfield's Speaker, were generally popular books among boys: and also collections of small poems, such as Percy's Ballads, &c.

[1] Plato Repub. ii. 17. (p. 377.) &c. Lucian Gymnas. 21. Lexiphan. 22. Quinctilian x. 1. Petronius v. where see Burman.

[2] Juvenal viii. 226. Quinctilian x. 1. i. 8. It is to be observed that before Virgil and Horace became standard poets, the Romans seem to have had no education of this kind. It seems that their schools in those early times taught nothing but arithmetic. See Horace Epist. ad Pison. 325. and Satir. i. vi. 74.

[3] Quinctilian i. 8.

[4] Juvenal speaks, seemingly, of one of these schools, that of Chrysogonus, Sat. viii. 176; but he distinguishes this, if it be so, from those other of a lower kind about which he gives so many particulars, those of "Rufus and others;" (ibid. 213.)

of the same class as our middle schools would be, designed for the class of the people analogous to our middle class, although the different grades of society were not exactly the same as among us; and in these, Greek poets were read at Athens, Latin poets at Rome. Whatever reasons, then, the Greeks and Romans found for beginning the education of their citizens thus, the same would apply to our case; and we might make our own poetry produce all the good effects which these could have done, without some of the incidental evils which followed among them. There can be no doubt that this teaching did produce a great effect on the character of the people. If proof were wanting, we might cite Plato's vehemence in expelling poetry from his ideal theory of a state; which he would not have done unless the effect of their poetry, of which he complained, were really felt [1].

Another suggestion which I think worth making, concerns the manner in which these poets should be read. It is this, that they should not be made to take up a very large portion of time from the

showing plainly that these last were of the class of middle schools. Horace too plainly shows that the school of which he speaks, Sat. i. vi. 74, was one of the same class: for it was one to which he might have gone himself; and, therefore, what he says of the Roman schools generally, Epist. ad Pison. 325, probably applies to the same description of school.

[1] Plat. Repub. iii. &c.

school work. It would be a *light* part of the work, and should be made in great degree a recreation; not entirely so, but in great part: and the boys should be taught to regard reading and learning English poetry as *play* rather than work. This is a very important principle in framing a system of education: for it gains two advantages; first, it saves a great deal of time, for boys can, if they *will*, do a good deal of work of some kind in their spare hours. And also, which is of more importance, it forms a taste for intellectual pursuits as an amusement; they learn to take pleasure in some of those improving occupations which the dull and the indolent regard as laborious study. But this method must be used with caution: nature has set limits which cannot be passed: relaxation and *play* there must be in due measure.

To carry the plan here recommended into execution, we must find poets fit for reading and learning in the manner proposed. I do not think this would cause any difficulty. Selections might be easily made. We might begin with Spenser and Shakespear, for we need not go farther back than these; the older poets would be unintelligible. All of Spenser might be read, unless where too hard. Shakespear is an inexhaustible mine for selection; some of Milton: these would do for the elder boys only. Many of the moral poets, as Young, Akenside, Collins, Beattie, and a little of Pope, &c.,

might be taken in. Then for the younger readers, the delight of childhood Cowper: and the rural poets, as Thomson and others. These would furnish an abundant supply: and it would be an easy task to make extracts suited for the purpose.

Many other points would need notice if I had undertaken to construct a complete system, or to write a treatise on education. I will only throw out one or two more hints. With poetry in the systems of the ancients was connected music. Among us they are quite separated. It can hardly be maintained now that music, as we use it, would have much effect in forming the moral character, the purpose for which Plato [1] laid so much stress on it in his system, and Aristotle [2] recommended it and laid down rules for it. It is however, at least, a refined amusement, and therefore very much to be encouraged. But more than this, music has always been a part of the public service in the Christian Church, and therefore it is much to be wished that the whole congregation were musicians enough to take part in it when so used, and make it a "reasonable service" of devotion, not a silent hearing of a few musicians. For these reasons it would seem advisable to introduce the study of music, (by way of recreation,) enough, at least, to cultivate a taste

[1] Repub. ii. &c.

[2] Politic. viii. 5. Comp. also Polyb. iv. 20.

for it, wherever there is any natural faculty for it, which most people, I think, have.

The question has been asked, whether the art of drawing should be taught? Drawing would be very useful to many of the middle classes: so useful that perhaps it might be left to those who were going into business that needed it, to find it for themselves; since it would be useless to some. But although it were not made part of the business of the school, facilities might be given it in connexion with the school. A teacher might be induced to come within easy reach, although he were no part of the school. It might be a good plan to have certain subjects optional; and a time assigned to them, which might be left open for each boy to employ according to his choice. As, for instance, geometry and trigonometry, drawing and music, perhaps even Latin, might be left free to be learnt or not: and the boy who declined geometry or Latin, might employ that time in going out of school to the music or drawing master.

I have not noticed learning either to read or to write. Provision, of course, must be made for both of these: it will not be possible, at least at first setting out, to ensure every boy's being able to read when he comes to the school.

The reading of history is one important point remaining: and with those who lean towards exaggerated notions of the value of a knowledge of

facts in education, it may pass for one of the most important. Certainly it ought not to be neglected. It seems then that the foundation of teaching history should be laid in the history of the Bible. For, in the first place, a knowledge of the history is necessary for understanding the Bible properly. Moreover the historical parts of the Bible will be more of the nature of a text-book of original history, than perhaps any thing else that will be read: for other histories, if read, will be only in summaries and compilations. And farther, since history is best studied by beginning at the beginning, the oldest should be read first, that is, the Bible history. The history of our own country ought to be taught. But for this some knowledge of the previous history of the world would properly be required. And in the study of it great care will be necessary to steer clear of party, the greater as you come nearer to the present time. Indeed this is a danger besetting all study of modern history by youth: and for this reason, it was wisely done that all our classical systems made *ancient* history the exclusive subject of study; for in that, the same lessons of practical wisdom are learnt, without the excitement of party feelings.

If our youth were turned loose to cram themselves with English history, at the time when they now learn the Greek and Roman, politics would soon banish scholarship, and every boy of sixteen

would have taken up his political position, as decidedly as if he were the leader of a party in the House of Commons. Great caution will, therefore, be needed in teaching history in your middle schools; and you ought to have proper histories written; of which I fear there is now a great dearth. This want, however, I hope is in course to be supplied, since competent hands have begun to set themselves about writing books on various subjects fit for the use of educated persons, (and for educating persons,) of the middle and lower classes.

I would observe farther, that, in my judgment, the study of history in any systematic way ought to be reserved in your schools for the upper part of them. Continuous history is read with small profit by very young persons. The best history for such is biography, which is an excellent introduction to history in general: because after reading his life, any remarkable personage comes into the history as an old acquaintance, and interests the reader accordingly. Biography too is more instructive to the young: for they can appreciate the example of one person whose life they read; but they cannot in the same way understand the actions and motives of the characters in history, so as to profit by their example. If the study of history is put off a little, and some time spent in such things as will improve the learner in other matters, he will afterwards come better prepared to history, and know as much

at the end of a given time after that as if he had learnt history during the whole time, and understand it much better. In our old university statutes, which, as you know, prescribed a complete course of study, the lectures on history were reserved until very late, after the first degree had been taken.[1] It is a great mistake that is now made in teaching, where boys are dragged early into the reading of the Greek and Roman historians (which historians, when they come to the University, they seldom really know—experto credite)—while they omit such a study of the poets, and other authors, as would make them good scholars.

With history, of course, must be taught geography. Other things might be named: such as popular astronomy, navigation, natural history, chemistry, botany, architecture, which might be occasionally introduced. I cannot approve of introducing manual arts; for it seems at once lowering education to professional instruction. If boys choose to amuse themselves in play hours by such things, they might: but I would not teach them as part of the system; or you will have parents send their children there to be made good carpenters instead of good men. Such things might be not amiss as exercises for health. Certainly they would suit our system better than the athletic exercises

[1] Stat. Univ. Tit. iv. §. 11.

which the ancients made part of their education, for these were intended to train their citizens to be all soldiers, and skilled in the use of their weapons. It is not necessary for us to give up so large a part of education to the training of the body as they did: but nevertheless it is a subject not altogether to be passed over: and provision should be made for ensuring a sufficient quantity of proper and healthy exercise, especially if your schools are set up in towns. Whether manual arts might be taught for this purpose, is worth considering.

But I have already much exceeded the limits which I intended to set myself; and you must have read more than enough. Let others now take up the subject, and work it out.

That your efforts may prosper in the cause in which you are now engaged, is the earnest wish of him who has the honour to subscribe himself,

Ever very sincerely yours,

ROBERT HUSSEY.

Christ Church, Oxford,
June 29, 1839.

THE END.

LONDON:
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

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THE

PRINCIPLES

OF

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE'S

PAROCHIAL ASSESSMENTS BILL,

AND THE

TITHE COMMUTATION ACT,

COMPARED,

IN A LETTER

TO THE

REV. RICHARD JONES, M.A.

ONE OF THE TITHE COMMISSIONERS FOR ENGLAND AND WALES,

BY THE

REV. CHARLES MILLER, M.A.

VICAR OF HARLOW, ESSEX.

" Never for any cause, or on any occasion, affirm a principle in which you do not believe, or refuse to affirm a principle in which you do believe."
Lord Stanley's Speech at Merchant Tailors' Hall, May 12, 1838.

" Causæ ecclesiæ publicis causis æquiparantur. Summa est ratio quæ pro religione facit."—*Maxims of the Law.*

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. G. & F. RIVINGTON,

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH YARD, AND WATERLOO PLACE, PALL MALL;

J. H. PARKER, OXFORD; & H. GUY, CHELMSFORD.

1839.

LONDON:
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

LETTER,

&c.

Reverend Sir,

As a Clergyman of the Church established by law in this country, I am anxious to return my acknowledgements to you for your publication relating to a Bill brought into Parliament last session, for the regulation of Parochial Assessments[1]. You say, in effect, of the Bill, against which your Protest is directed, that if its title, its recitals, and enacting part, are compared together, it will be seen to be marked by some characteristics not often to be read, as you hope, on the face of the acts of our Legislature[2]; and again, you speak of it as "*an act of*

[1] "Remarks on the manner in which Tithe should be assessed to the Poor's Rate under the existing law, with a Protest against the change which will be produced in that law by a Bill introduced into the House of Commons by Mr. Shaw Lefevre." Shaw and Sons, Fetter Lane.

[2] Remarks, &c., p. 45.

direct spoliation, in the face of two recent legislative pledges that this should not be[1]." This, Sir, is very strong language; and yet surely it is not stronger than the circumstances of the case require[2]. That you have, in an eminent degree, been instrumental in putting off, for the present, the further consideration of this question by the Legislature, cannot be doubted; and your able Protest entitles you to the

[1] Remarks, &c., p. 62.

[2] Since the above was written, I have seen a letter to the Right Hon. Lord J. Russell, by John Phillpotts, Esq., M.P., Barrister at Law, (Hatchard and Son,) in answer to your Protest. It is there asserted, (p. 4,) that "the question at issue is a dry question of law." The proper course would then have been that which I perceive it is now proposed to adopt, an appeal to a legal tribunal. The learned author observes, (p. 17,) in allusion to the case of Rex *v.* Joddrell, "It is impossible to approach the decision in that case, *without the greatest diffidence.*" How then can the supporters of Mr. Shaw Lefevre's Bill justify themselves from the charge you bring against them. It cannot be maintained that the authors and supporters of that Bill approached the decision with any diffidence.

There are in reality two points at issue; First, the dry point of law, of which there may be doubts; and, Secondly, the course by which it was proposed to remove the doubts. Mr. Phillpotts, as it appears to me, has not kept these points sufficiently distinct; and has consequently represented your censures in an unfair light. The severe terms which you have made use of, and of which complaint is made, were not directed against "*those who differ from you on the point* (of law) *at issue*," but *against the Bill viewed with reference to the circumstances under which it was introduced into Parliament.*

best thanks of those, whether Laity or Clergy, who respect the constitutional rights and privileges of the Church. But though I thus fully agree with you as to the nature, the origin, and the principles of this Bill, and as sincerely deplore the feeling in which it originated, I cannot but regard its introduction into Parliament at this juncture, as likely to lead to beneficial consequences; inasmuch as it developes the character of another measure, which, not very long ago, received the sanction of the Legislature. In this view I also hope, that, independently of its immediate good effect, it will be useful in directing attention to the only grounds, as it appears to me, on which encroachments upon Church Property can be effectually resisted. I cannot but feel concern that certain expressions should have escaped you, which seem altogether inconsistent with those great principles on which you have rested the defence of our cause. If you will do me the favour to read the letter to Mr. Palmer, of which I am the author[1], you will perceive that I allude to the Tithe Commutation Act: you will probably also discover my reason for objecting to those expressions in your Protest, and, perhaps, give me the credit of having paid some attention to the

[1] "Some Observations on the dangerous principles and tendency of the Tithe Act, in a Letter to George Palmer, Esq., M. P." London: Rivingtons, 1838.

subject. I ask no one to attach value to my opinions, but only to the authorities on which they rest. These authorities are unquestionable; and I must contend that the greater weight is to be attached to them, because, though differing in time, place, and occasion, they all terminate in one and the same result. I have appealed to speeches at a county meeting, never exceeded in respectability; I have appealed to debates in Parliament, and Acts of Parliament; to the decisions of Judges, and the charges of Bishops. No one can say that I have advocated views peculiar to myself; and I can now make some addition to the high authorities which I have adduced. The Bishop of Oxford, in a charge recently delivered to the Clergy of his diocese, thus expresses himself: "I have not hitherto heard that the effects of the Tithe Commutation press heavily upon the Clergy. Doubtless we ought to give up much for the sake of peace. *But it must not be forgotten that we have surrendered a right on which the very existence of the Establishment may depend;* for it is indisputable, that if the course just legalized had been adopted at the Reformation, the Clergy would at this time have been without the means of subsistence. I pray God that my apprehensions on this score may not be realized[1]." I have also been credibly informed that a

[1] "Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Diocese of Oxford. July and August, 1838," p. 17.

very high legal authority [1] has stated his private opinion, that this measure cannot be carried into effect, partly alluding, perhaps, to the difficulties which will arise from it in the transfer of property, and which were pointed out to me by Mr. Palmer. For by the eighty-first section of the Tithe Act, if the apportioned rent-charge should be in arrear, the party interested may distrain upon any part of the land for arrears of the whole. And according to the maxim *terra transit cum onere*, where the lands cannot be released from the rent-charge, and are divided by the sale of part, the owner of the rent-charge may indiscriminately distrain upon the lands sold, or the lands not sold, for his whole arrears. If A sells a part of his estate to B, the estate will henceforward belong to two owners; but the land sold cannot be released from the rent-charge without a new apportionment [2], which will be attended with

[1] "I take advantage," writes a friend, "of the opportunity of answering your enquiry as to what Lord .... said about the Tithe Act. You know it was merely spoken in common conversation. He said nothing against the principle of such a measure, but that he did not think it could possibly work long, and that it must speedily undergo some amendment, as it will be found almost impossible to carry it into effect."

[2] See §§ 58 and 72 of the Tithe Act. Is there any appeal from the new apportionment under the latter section? If so, here is further expense, uncertainty, and litigation. If not, then three commissioners of the land-tax, and two justices of the peace, are made arbiters of the property of the Church, without its natural guardians having any voice in the matter.

so much difficulty and expense as, in many cases, to be impracticable. And without such new apportionment, the land of A may be distrained upon for the arrears of B, and *vice versâ*.

But if I require any additional authority for my opinions respecting the Tithe Act, I can now appeal to the declarations of a Tithe Commissioner himself. I propose to compare the principle of Mr. Shaw Lefevre's Assessment Bill with that of the Tithe Act. There are many points of resemblance between these two measures; and, as far as principle is to be regarded, they must stand or fall together. I have indeed, in my Letter to Mr. Palmer, adduced some arguments not available for your purpose, and so a part of your Protest is not available for mine. But referring to your chief argument, in the force of which I cordially agree, it seems extraordinary that, while our opinions are so much in unison respecting the Assessment Bill, they should be diametrically opposite on the subject of the Tithe Act. If you object to the indecent haste with which it was proposed to hurry the Assessment Bill through Parliament, it seems to me that you are necessarily adding to my objections against the Tithe Act. The same thought is suggested to my mind, when I read either your appeal to the decisions of judges and an Act of Parliament of the reign of Elizabeth, or your observations on the impolicy and danger of trenching upon the fund which is destined to procure

religious instruction for the people. Taking all these things into consideration, I cannot help calling upon you to review that part of your Protest, where you say that you "look back upon the Commutation Act, as, under all the circumstances of this country, social, economical[1], political, a fair and wise measure; and that you do so without a shadow of doubt and a flutter of disquietude."

Permit me to enter a little more at large into this question. Your words are as follows: "The population is increasing fast. The national wants which that fund is to satisfy are increasing with the population. *Every circumstance which tends to shrivel and diminish such a fund increases the probability that the time is at hand, when it may become inadequate to the wants of the multiplied people. Those*

[1] To facilitate the redemption of tithes, the Act allows the commutation rent to be charged upon a part of the land, provided it be three times the value of the rent-charge. Lands, if impoverished, subject to so heavy a charge as one-third of their whole value, may very possibly be kept entirely out of cultivation. I have recently met with an instance in which unincumbered land had been brought to so low a state, that it would not pay the necessary expenses of farming. But if this evil occurs where the land is unincumbered, it will, I fear, be much more frequent when the land is subject to a heavy rent-charge. The clergyman in the circumstances alluded to will be in the situation of a mortgagee who cannot obtain his interest, and cannot sell or let the property mortgaged. This appears to me one of the numerous economical objections to the Tithe Act.

who live at that day will listen to, those of ordinary foresight in our own may foretell, the tone of austere condemnation in which that Act of Legislation will be judged, which, while it apparently sanctions only a mass of private injuries, commits what will too probably be an irreparable public wrong." (p. 69.) An enlightened system of legislation, then, regards the future as well as the present; and if so, I think you should hesitate, before you pronounce any Act for the *permanent commutation of tithes* a wise measure?

But supposing that tithes ought to be commuted, I search in vain in the pages of your Protest for the reasons why they ought not to be commuted upon fair and equitable principles. The Tithe Act adds something to the revenues of the owners of the soil: "A small gain to that great body, a great loss to those" (the successors of the present clergy) "from whose pockets it is to be extracted." (p. 64.) It cannot, therefore, be a fair measure, according to your own statement.

"It is obvious," you observe, "that if it was discovered that the occupiers had been rating the tithe too high, the fact that too much had been kept back from the clergyman for some years preceding the commutation would be a very bad reason for continuing to rate the clergyman too high for the future." (p. 59.) Nothing can be more fair or sound or just than this reasoning; but here again you are

protesting against the principle of the Tithe Act, which deprives the clergy of property for ever, because they may have relinquished it for a time. Surely it is equally unjust to say to the clergyman, you have been voluntarily receiving too little tithe for the past, and therefore you shall by law receive too little tithe for the future, as it is to say, you have been rated too high for the past, and therefore you shall be rated too high for the future.

"I have shown," you say, "that the Bill through which this wrong is to be inflicted is one which, from its very construction, is unfit to pass Parliament; that it is not, what it professes to be in a delusive title, a declaratory law, but is in truth a bill, of which the purpose is violently to repeal all the statutes and laws of the realm which stand in the way of its framer." (p. 62.) I contend that the Tithe Act is equally delusive in its preamble and contents. The preamble is delusive, because it professes to *amend* the law which it substantially *repeals;* and, as to the delusive provisions for a *voluntary* commutation of tithes, I will repeat the words of Mr. Granville Harcourt Vernon in another matter[1]. "I see something of the Stuart principle about the present plan. It is to be a voluntary act on the part of the Church, only under strong

[1] Debate on Church-rates, March 13, 1837.—Mirror of Parliament, p. 624.

compulsion." May I not reasonably ask, why this delusiveness is to be stigmatized in a Church-rate Bill, and yet allowed to pass without censure in the Tithe Act?

You appeal against the Assessment Bill to the Statute-book and judicial decisions; tracing the law, and the interpretation of the law, from the reign of Elizabeth to the present time. This argument from authority is perfectly sound, and its force is recognised by every law; by the principles of the British Constitution, and by the law of our natural reason.

But here again, if you argue against the Assessment Bill on the ground of ancient laws, I refer you to the pages of Burn and Selden[1] for the antiquity of the law of tithes, and to the provision of Magna Charta for guarding the property of the Church. But what were the laws respecting the possessions of the Church in the reign of Elizabeth, to which you refer? Previously to that reign, ecclesiastical persons might, with the concurrence of certain parties, have freely alienated the lands of the Church; "*whereupon*," says Lord Coke, "*not only great decay of Divine Service, but dilapidations and other inconveniences ensued, and therefore they were disabled and restrained by the Acts* 1 *Eliz.*, 13 *Eliz., and* 1 *Jac.*[2]" The first of these Acts pro-

[1] History of Tithes, passim.

[2] Co. Li. fo. 44.

hibited Bishops from alienating their lands but by lease, as is therein mentioned, excepting that they were still allowed to freely alienate them to the Crown. The next Act[1] similarly restrained other ecclesiastical persons from alienating their possessions, and without any exception in favour of the Crown. The exception in the former Act had been greatly abused by the Earl of Leicester and others; and the evils arising from it were strongly denounced by Archbishop Whitgift to the Queen. Read and consider his speech on this subject, related in Walton's Life of Hooker. He prevailed upon the Queen to restrain the abuse, and she thenceforward took care to preserve the rights of the Church. And on the accession of James I., the last of the restraining statutes[2] referred to by Lord Coke pro-

[1] "And, for that long and unreasonable leases .... be the chiefest causes of the dilapidations and the decay of all spiritual livings and hospitality, and the utter impoverishing of all successors, incumbents in the same, be it enacted that from henceforth all leases by parson, vicar, or any other having any spiritual or ecclesiastical living, or any houses, lands, tithes ... other than for the term of one-and-twenty years, or three lives ... shall be utterly void and of none effect." 13 Eliz. c. 20.

[2] "An Act against the diminution of the archbishoprics and bishoprics, and for avoiding of dilapidation of the same," reciting that "all the archbishoprics and bishoprics in England, were in ancient times founded by .... kings of this realm, and, in respect thereof, his Majesty is lawful and rightful patron ...; and where also, by the laws and statutes of this realm, no archbishop or bishop can make any conveyance ... of any honours, castles,

hibited the alienation of the possession of bishoprics to the Crown for the future; the settling of which statute appears to have been a closing act of Archbishop Whitgift's holy life. These statutes, Sir, expressly forbid such alienation of Church property as the Tithe Act commands. And can you assert that any change of circumstances has occurred to justify such a change in legislation? What would have been the condition of this country, if this *fair* and *wise* measure, *as you call it*, had been placed on the Statute-book in the days of Elizabeth? Let me direct your attention to this question; and then, I think, you must acknowledge that I have reason for expostulating with you on the manner in which you speak of the Tithe Act.

You further rest your Protest against the Assessment Bill upon the decisions of Judges: applying which argument to the Tithe Act, I hope you will attach due value to the decision

manors, lands, tenements, or hereditaments, parcel of the possessions of his archbishopric or bishopric, ... to any subject, ... other than for term of one-and-twenty years or three lives, ... his most excellent Majesty... minding so to patronize and protect the said possessions from alienation or diminution, as that the same may, ACCORDING TO THE TRUE INTENT OF THE FOUNDERS, remain and continue in succession to the archbishops and bishops of this realm, and their successors, for the better maintenance of God's true religion, keeping of hospitality, and avoiding of dilapidations," prohibits and makes void all alienation of such possessions to the Crown for the future. 1 Jac. I. c. 3.

of Lord Chancellor Northington[1], showing that the law, in compositions for tithes, has always had regard to their future increasing value, which this Act has not. And, for the danger to be apprehended from a diminution of Church property, I would again refer you to Lord Coke. A layman, he observes (2 Rep. 446), is not capable of tithes at the common law, except in special cases. "*And the law hath great policy therein, for the decay of the revenues of men of Holy Church, in the end, will be the overthrow of the service of God and of his religion.*" There were two persecutions, he adds; one by Dioclesian, and the other by Julian the Apostate. The former slew all priests, but still religion flourished: for '*Sanguis Martyrum est Semen Ecclesiæ.*' "*But the persecution under the other was* "*more grievous and dangerous, because (as history* "*saith) 'Ipse occidit Presbyterium,' for he robbed the* "*Church, and spoiled spiritual persons of their reve-* "*nues, and took all from them wherein they might* "*live; and thereupon in short time did follow great* "*ignorance of the true religion and service of God,* "*and thereby great decay of the Christian Profession;* "FOR NONE WILL APPLY THEMSELVES, OR THEIR "SONS OR ANY OTHER WHOM HE HATH IN CHARGE "TO THE STUDY OF DIVINITY, WHEN THEY SHALL "HAVE, AFTER LONG AND PAINFUL STUDY, NOTHING "TO LIVE UPON."

[1] Attorney-general *v.* Cholmly; Burn, Eccles. Law.

You say of the Assessment Bill, "I have examined all the pleas and arguments by which, as far as I have seen, it has been attempted to throw a garb of righteousness and equity over this proceeding, and have shown that they are delusive, and cannot effectually veil what it is in truth, an act of direct spoliation—the spoliation of a weak party, absent from the House of Commons, by a powerful party, present and active in it." (p. 62.) But are not these observations strictly applicable to the Tithe Act also? I am sorry that you should, in your turn, seek to "throw a garb of equity and righteousness over that proceeding," by calling it a "fair and wise measure."

Some persons have said, in reference to the Tithe Act, that it was wise for the Clergy to abate something of their rights, for social reasons; to conciliate good will, and exhibit disinterested conduct. But this view, you expressly tell us, should have no influence upon legislative enactments. "Admitting, it is said, that the Clergy will suffer to a certain extent—it is not decorous in them to complain and struggle on a point of mere secular interest. Now it is really difficult," you reply, "to be quite serious when we hear such arguments gravely used for such purposes as they are meant to effect in this case. Meekness, charity, the absence of worldly-mindedness, are excellent things to discourse on, and one cannot but wish that all mankind

should profit by such discourses, the Clergy among the rest; though I must really say that they do not appear to me to be the particular class in society which stand most in need of admonition on these heads. But what are we to think of such topics, when advanced to influence courts of justice, or *legislative bodies deciding on matters of property*. Let us imagine, if we can, a personification of Justice, with two parties contending before her for rights; can we believe her addressing one of them thus: You are, or ought to be, by profession and duty, meek, forbearing, kind, liberal, bountiful, out of proportion to your means, and therefore I am going to take something out of your pocket to-day, which I declared to belong to you yesterday, that I may make a present of it to your adversary, from whom no one pretends to exact any such virtues." (p. 62.) The same argument may be more strongly urged against the act for the commutation of tithes.

And here I must express my concern that you should ever have lost sight of those sound views of civil policy. Why will you tamper with the principles of the nobility and gentry of this country, by talking to them about a compromise, if they chance to *dislike* the law, thereby cherishing the fatal error that it should depend on their liking or dislike[1], and not solely on the principle of right

[1] "If instead of beginning with this deed of open violence, those who dislike the law declared by the courts of justice to be

or the real present and future interests of their country? Why will you not enforce upon the Clergy the paramount duty of contending for their rights, as inseparably connected with the future efficiency of the Church, and the future welfare of the nation? Many (the great majority I hope) of the laity, who are now busying themselves with schemes of commutation, are quite unconscious of the mischief which must result. They see no harm in appropriating to themselves what the present Clergy (who I maintain are trustees for the Church) may be willing to relinquish. And, in the teeth of your own principles, *you* countenance their delusion, by calling the Tithe Act a "*fair and wise measure.*"

The introduction and reception of Mr. Shaw Lefevre's Bill makes me wonder you should retain a favourable opinion of the Tithe Act. I should have been less surprised, if such had been your opinion when it passed; for many were inclined to think well of it as a salutary and healing measure, which would soften down animosities against the Church, of which tithes were the supposed cause. For my part, I was always convinced that the Tithe system was not in fault, but that the real evil was to be found in the error and avarice of human nature. I therefore asserted in my letter to Mr. Palmer, (which was written before I had heard of the As-

that of this realm, had sought, or would seek a reasonable and equitable modification," &c. (p. 63.)

sessment Bill) that the hopes of those who thought that they should remove all hostility to the Church by providing a substitute for Tithes, would prove delusive. I do not pretend to more than ordinary foresight, nor did the case require more. The issue has proved that my opinion was correct; but I candidly own that I did not expect so speedy a renewal of the attack upon the Church. I thought that her enemies would be satisfied for a time, and that they would at least remain content whilst they were gathering in the spoils, which an Act of Parliament had placed within their reach. The Assessment Bill is an early, and, therefore, as I cannot but think, a providential development of the principle of the Tithe Act; and I suspect, that, whatever are *your* opinions, many of the Clergy who once thought well of that Act,—(you, probably, have the means of knowing whether my suspicions are correct), will not join you in looking back upon it "*without a flutter of disquietude.*" Their disquietude will hardly be removed by the following extract from your Protest:—"Over a very large proportion of England the tithe has never been rated at all. Till lately this practice of omitting the tithe from the assessment prevailed more generally still; and when at length householders and others insisted that the tithe should appear in the rate book, the occupiers of the land very generally paid the tithe themselves, and had a direct interest in rating the tithe as low as possible.

In neither of these cases, was any serious discussion as to the principles of rating likely to arise; the rough and varying practice that prevailed has, in truth, no reference to any principle at all; *and the Clergy obviously had no interest whatever in interfering with the manner in which the vestry and parish officers made up their rate-books.*" (p. 31.)

Thus it seems, that under the old state of things, there were scarcely any disputes respecting rates between the clergyman and his parishioners. Now, however, your "*own table, as Ecclesiastical Tithe Commissioner, has been covered with letters from the Clergy, complaining that the conventions and usages on which tithe had ordinarily been rated, were broken up; that their position in the rate-book was worse than it had been. For the first time many of them were driven to consult works on the law of rating,*" and "*the country was on the point of being inundated with appeals.*" (p. 41.) Now, I would ask, did it never occur to you what was the immediate cause of this confusion? Did not the letters which you notice come from those of the Clergy, who were taking advantage, as they thought, of the provisions for a voluntary commutation of tithes? You have had no letters from me on this subject,—I have given you no trouble, nor have my parishioners given me any trouble; and this for the reasons stated in the extract from your Protest. If it be asked why "the country was on the point of being

inundated with appeals," I do not see what answer can be given, except that it arose from the Tithe Act.

Your commendation of this measure is scarcely a feather in the balance, when weighed against those arguments which you adduce against the Assessment Bill. I hope that the Clergy will adopt your warning voice, "to struggle stoutly to prevent their lawful rights from being violently taken from them, while their equitable claims are thrown aside and disregarded." (p. 9.) I hope that we shall temperately, but firmly claim the full enjoyment of those high privileges, which our pious ancestors bestowed in perpetuity on the British Church, and which our youthful Sovereign has solemnly sworn at God's altar that she will defend.

Your Protest against the Assessment Bill, and a document which lately issued from the Tithe Commissioners' Office with your signature, seem to refute the popular objections which have been urged against tithes. But I will first state, in the words of an eminent prelate, what these objections are. "No sooner, it was said, had the cultivator, by an increased outlay or a more judicious application of capital, augmented the produce of the land, than the tithe-owner stepped in 'to reap where he had not sown,' and claimed for himself a tenth part of the fruits of the skill and industry of another. The

poorer too the soil, the greater the hardship upon the cultivator; because a greater outlay was necessary to obtain the same amount of produce. The other objection applied exclusively to tithes in the hands of the Clergy; they placed, it was said, the interest of the Clergy in direct opposition to those of many of the members of their flocks, and thus gave occasion to jealousies and heart-burnings altogether destructive of the mutual harmony and good will which ought to exist between the minister of religion and the people committed to his care; and on the existence of which, the efficacy of his labours for their spiritual good must, in a great measure, depend. How, it was asked, could they be expected to listen with profit to his exhortations on the Lord's Day, when in the course of the preceding week, they had, perhaps, been engaged in an angry dispute with him about the amount of his temporal dues? If the ingenuity of man had been set to work to invent a plan for lowering the ministerial character, and injuring the cause of religion, a more effectual mode, it was contended, could scarcely have been devised, than one which thus rendered the Clergy continually liable to be brought into collision with their parishioners about their pecuniary interests. These were the two objections to the Tithe system chiefly insisted upon by its opponents. In both instances I believe the magnitude of the evil to have been greatly exaggerated: I believe that in conse-

quence of the general moderation of the Clergy in claiming their legal right, the cases in which they have failed in coming to an amicable arrangement with the tithe-payer, or in which the slightest impediment has been thrown in the way of agricultural improvements, have been very rare[1]."

Here let me bring forward some of your statements which confirm that view. You say that, "As far as the commutations have gone, the average compositions, with an addition of about two per cent, is what the Clergy have received for the resignation of their rights as tithe-owners. Now, this does not amount to two-thirds, I speak within very modest limits, of what the land-owners would have had to yield or pay, had the full rights of the Clergy been exercised: nor is this all nor the chief part of the advantages secured to the land-owners. *The income of the Church was increasing rapidly and must have increased largely.*" When writing on the Tithe Bill, I had occasion to remark: "In 1755 the population of Great Britain was 7,526,180 souls; in 1831, 16,539,318: that in seventy-five years it had considerably more than doubled the additional produce of agriculture—more than kept pace with the increasing population" (*and yet the Tithe system was a clog upon agriculture*). "The vegetable food consumed was raised in quality and changed, over

[1] Bishop of Lincoln's Charge at the Triennial Visitation, 1837.

a great part of the country, from inferior grains to wheat; the consumption of butchers' meat per head became greater" (*all this under the Tithe system*). "Importations from Ireland and elsewhere were greatly overbalanced, to the extent of five or six millions of quarters, by the corn grown as food for the additional horses kept."

"*The population*," you continue, "*is at this moment increasing more rapidly than it did during those seventy-five years.* During every ten years the whole population is adding fifteen per cent to its numbers. During the ten years from 1831 to 1841 the addition will amount to 2,480,000. When this decennial period has been completed, an addition will have been made to the demand of the home market, equal to three times the demand of Wales; rather exceeding that of Scotland, greater than that of the Dutch United Provinces, or of the kingdom of Denmark. While such enormous additions are made to the home demand in so short a time, a constant stimulus to agriculture must necessarily be acting from year to year with a powerful and continuous effect. Now the yearly increase of production is answering so largely, that it has somewhat outstripped this gigantic increase of demand. The ports have been closed for some time, and the late low prices of home-grown corn, now apparently rising, were confessedly produced by a temporary repletion" (pp. 55, 56). I think, Sir, this statement confirms my

view that the Tithe system formed no real obstacle to the improvement of the soil; nor should it have occasioned jealousy that the income of the Clergy had a constant tendency to increase, while its increase was in proportion to the growth of population, which always brings with it an increase of their duties.

Other observations are suggested by the foregoing extract from your Protest. It is, I believe, a maxim of political economists, that population has a constant tendency to increase beyond the means of subsistence [1]. But hitherto, in this country, the supply has increased with the demand: and hitherto, I may observe, we have been honouring God with the tenth of our increase. Is the prevention of the evil in question to be exclusively ascribed to physical causes? It is well to guard against a spirit of presumptuously accounting for national judgments and national blessings; yet there is an opposite and perhaps more dangerous extreme, which we must be equally careful to avoid. A steadfast *practical* belief in the operation of an unseen Power, perpetually superintending the affairs of men, should, in the *Christian* parliament of a *Christian* nation, surely be an element of legislative wisdom. And I ask, without any disposition to look out for *signs and wonders*, may not our land have this year failed to bear its usual produce

[1] Malthus on Population, book I.

because the nation has desisted from honouring God with the tenth of her increase [1]?

But, granting that tithes do not check agricultural improvement, it is said to be a hardship upon landlords and tenants that the clergy should receive a tenth of the increased produce derived from the capital laid out on the land. But the landlord and tenant purchased or hired the land subject to tithe, and therefore paid so much less for it. And—*volenti non fit injuria*—they laid out much or little capital upon it *only of their own accord*. The real question, however, is not whether the Tithe system was without objection, but whether it had not counterbalancing advantages. Our population was constantly increasing, and the value of tithes was increasing with it. The Tithe system tended to provide adequate religious instruction for future generations; and those who rightly estimated this blessing, would not have complained of the alleged hardship.

It has been further said, that the Tithe system is unpopular. But so are taxes, so are rates; so are *rents*, and so will be *rent-charges*. Let me, however,

[1] See Prov. iii. 9, and Mal. iii. 8, 9. The question also was not whether we should for the first time erect the Tithe system, but whether we should maintain it after it had been established for a thousand years. "I am well aware," said Lord Melbourne in another matter, "that it is not the same thing to destroy, as never to have constituted, to demolish as never to have built up." (Lord Melbourne's speech as quoted by Sir James Graham at Carlisle, St. James's Chronicle, January 9, 1838.)

answer this objection in the words of Sir Robert Inglis, respecting Church Rates[1]. "I contend that they (church rates) form a portion of the estates of the Church, and that she holds them by a tenure which is older than that which secures the title of any other property whatever.... The first position which my honourable friend has taken, is on the popular dislike to church rates; but does not that resolve itself into this proposition, Resist the law, and it will be repealed? Unless we are prepared strictly to maintain the law, I will venture to say, that this principle will be carried out, until the next thing will be a demand to be relieved from the payment of rents upon the same ground (of conscientious scruple)." In this way we should have met the objection, that tithes were unpopular, but compromise and concession have been tried, and the experiment has proved a miserable failure. You must not commend the Tithe Act for *social* reasons: these must be abjured for ever. The Clergy, according to your statement, have WAIVED ONE-THIRD OF THEIR LEGAL DEMANDS; and the fruits of this surrender are anything but peace and security. The relinquished ground has only furnished room for another hostile manœuvre. Can the end which you propose, of "making the land-owner and clergyman not otherwise than pleased with each other,"

[1] Debate in the House of Commons, March 3 1837.—Mirror of Parliament, p. 442.

be attained by the course we are pursuing? We are tampering with property and principles; and changing everything but our own minds, which alone required to be changed. Thus we have aggravated the evil which we promised ourselves we should remove; for it is clear, that the Tithe Act is the immediate cause of those questions about rating, which have covered your table with letters from the Clergy, and, in the words of Mr. Phillpotts, "have roused a spirit of agitation which every true friend of the National Church must deprecate and deplore[1]." No decision of a court of law can settle those questions; for upon whatever principle the rent-charge be assessed, there will still be questions respecting the rating, which will lead to litigation. I sincerely hope that my predictions may prove false, but I fear that disputes between the clergyman and his parishioners about rates will henceforward be more numerous than they have ever been about tithes. Meanwhile the Clergy will not have the same opportunity which they enjoyed under the old system, of conciliating the good will of their parishioners, by abating their legal demands; which has always appeared to me a strong "social" objection to the Tithe Act.

If we would produce real and lasting harmony between the land-owner and the clergyman, a more laborious process is required than to pass an

[1] Letter to Lord John Russell, p. 29.

Act of Parliament. The Laity must bear in mind, that an efficient body of Clergy is a real blessing to the nation, and, like other things of value, cannot be maintained without some cost. The Clergy, disowning that *counterfeit* the voluntary system, must enforce, *with authority*, their right of reaping worldly things, where they sow spiritual things; they must constantly inculcate the duty incumbent upon all men of honouring God with their substance, as well as with their service. Such is the harmony and wisdom of the Divine counsels, that an act of duty and a testimony of *affection* towards God, is also a means to uphold and perpetuate his truth. The vine-dresser must live of the vineyard, the shepherd of the flock; "the labourer is worthy of his hire;" and "*so hath the Lord also ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel*[1]." It was this principle that gave the Church her endowments; and only this principle can effectually secure them. That there should be a corresponding feeling on the part of the Clergy I readily concede[2]; the revenues of

[1] 1 Cor. ix. See in Common Prayer, Communion Service, Offertory.

[2] Such was the prayer of the pious George Herbert: "And seeing all my tythes and church dues are a deodate from thee, O my God; make me, O my God, so far to trust Thy promise, as to return them back to Thee."—Walton's Life of Herbert.

the Church ought not, I conceive, to be regarded as the private property of those who hold them; though to control their disposition accordingly, may be beyond the reach of human enactment. But these important principles have been kept in the back ground; the sacred nature of Church endowments has not been sufficiently considered; and we have been thinking too much of Acts of Parliament. Security has made us careless. We have allowed the popular objections against tithes to spread without refutation; and those objections have been adopted, not only by the covetous and worldly-minded, but by those also who might otherwise have imbibed very different sentiments. "I would know," says Hooker, "what nation in the world did ever honour God, and not think it a point of their duty to do Him honour with their very goods. So that this we may boldly set down as a principle clear in nature, an axiom that ought not to be called in question, a truth manifest and infallible, that men are eternally bound to honour God with their substance, in token of thankful acknowledgment that all they have is from Him. To honour Him with our worldly goods, not only by spending them in lawful manner, and by using them without offence, but also by alienating from ourselves some reasonable part or portion thereof, and by offering up the same to Him, as a sign that we gladly confess his sole and sovereign dominion over all, is a

duty which all men are bound unto, and a part of that very worship of God, which the law of God and nature itself requireth; so we are the rather to think all men no less strictly bound thereunto than to any other natural duty[1]." Thus far this profound, and learned, and pious author. But through false shame, or want of faith, or for some unworthy cause, we seem to be allowing this sacred duty to be expunged from our code of law. I know it is your anxious desire to remove our existing embarrassments. All who love the Church and their country, owe you a debt of gratitude for this; and, for myself, I cannot but be anxious to see you employing the energies of your powerful mind in upholding those important truths to which I have referred. It is only, I am persuaded, by a strict attention to these truths, that "the clergyman and the land-owner can be pleased with each other."

There is another evil too prevalent; our imperfect view of the design of those who furnished the Church with her endowments. When a school or professorship is founded, the foundation is obviously for the sake of education, or the advancement of science: the provision for the schoolmaster or professor being only a secondary concern, and subservient to the higher purpose. The principle appears the same in the case of the Church, though some of the Laity, in a generous and confiding spirit

[1] Eccles. Pol. b. v. p. 79.

(for which may we be ever grateful), speak of tithes "as the reserved nationality for the purposes of religion, or as endowments attached to the persons of the Clergy[1]." But the complete view of the question must be stated in another manner. "It is not the value of the benefice," to use the words of our zealous and able Diocesan, alluding to "the Act for restricting the holding of benefices in plurality, and for promoting the residence of the parochial Clergy"—"It is not the value of the benefice, as a saleable commodity, no, nor even as a provision for the incumbent, which is the *first* object to be looked to; but the pastoral care and instruction of those, for whose benefit the *whole* endowment was given[2]." This is obviously the constitutional view of the subject. For the glory of God and such national purposes the rights of the Clergy were given; and therefore are they specially secured

[1] "If we are asked," writes Mr. Gladstone, "wherein now consists, or by what signs is attended the nationality of the Church in England, we answer thus:"—"Sixteenthly," (after enumerating fifteen other signs,) "by the possession of the tithes, whether we consider them as (to use the phrase of Mr. Coleridge), the reserved nationality for the purposes of religion, or as endowments attached to the persons of the Clergy."—The State in its relations with the Church, by W. E. Gladstone, Esq. M.P., chap. vii. sect. 4.

[2] Charge to the Clergy of the Diocese of London at the Visitation, 1838, by Charles James, Lord Bishop of London, p. 11. (Fellowes, London).

by the coronation oath of the Sovereign [1]. But if so, how miserably defective must be our present system of legislating in Church matters, when a minister of the crown, (acting, I cheerfully admit, under a considerate feeling) rests his defence of a measure on the ground of its being *harmless to the existing Clergy*; saying, "that no proposition had emanated "from them (the ministry), which would go to de- "prive the Church of the property which it has "hitherto enjoyed; no matter to whom it belonged, "from the hierarchy down to the lowest curate of "the land [2]." What then becomes of the principle, that the Clergy are trustees for the Church. If the Noble Lord's justification be sufficient, the rights of the churches and the people are gone.

I proceed to make some observations upon a Report which lately issued from your office. This asserts that the commutation has hitherto proceeded with less irritation and opposition than might

[1] *Archbishop or Bishop.* "Will you to the utmost of your power maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by the law? And will you preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of this realm, and to the CHURCHES committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges, as by law do or shall appertain unto them, or any of them?" *King or Queen.* "All this I promise to do."—See Blackstone's Commentaries, book I. chap. vi.

[2] Speech of Lord John Russell (Times Newspaper, May 4, 1838). The same argument was used by him in the discussion of the Ecclesiastical Duties and Revenue Bill Feb. 25, 1839.

have been expected. How is this to be reconciled with the picture of uneasiness and discomfort, which you describe in your Protest, and which must be taken into account, if we are to form a comprehensive and impartial view of the whole subject? Again I perceive, by certain symptoms in this Report, that the Tithe Act is not a very popular or practical measure. Endeavouring to account why so little has been done, without adverting to the true cause, you call upon the people to give their full attention to the business; and at the same time insinuate, that some pressure from without may be necessary, to set the machine in motion, or accelerate its progress. It thus appears that the voluntary commutation is insufficient, and that compulsion must be used. And here I enter my protest against this hasty and violent proceeding. In legislating upon copyholds, long time is taken that the rights of lord and copyholder may be fairly adjusted; but one session was deemed sufficient to dissolve the clergyman's title of a thousand years; he is invited to be accessary to this spoliation of the Church; and compulsion crowns the work. The Tithe Act must be respected, as law, until it is repealed; yet I cannot but regard it as hastily passed in a moment of excitement, without due regard to the principles of the Constitution, or to the proper relations of Church and State. "This measure," you say of the Assessment Bill, as I would

say of the Tithe Act, "is clearly before us with titles to deference very different from those which would surround an Act founded on a fair and deliberate examination of the subject. . . . . If the owners of property, who see in our legislative bodies powerful and active parties with opposite interests to theirs, are to be treated in *this new and rough manner*, the power of our popular assemblies will soon become a source of uneasiness and dismay, not of confidence and protection." (p. 50.)

The following statement, which comes from the rector of one of the parishes to which it refers, will show that the evil of which I am complaining is not imaginary. "W——— is a rectory in Northamptonshire. On the 20th of January, 1748, an Act passed for confirming an agreement made for the payment of an annuity or yearly rent charge of 100*l.* in lieu of the tithes, and 60 acres of glebe land in this parish, and also for a like payment in another parish, W———, about eight or nine miles distant. It appears that when the Act passed, the arrangement was fair and beneficial to the then incumbents; and it was supposed, but *most erroneously*, that it would be so to their successors. The Act recites 'that the yearly value or income of the said sixty acres of glebe land, and of all the tithes of the said parish of W———, did not, nor could, (one year with another) amount to more than the sum of £84:" And again, 'it would be greatly to the advantage

and benefit of the present incumbents and their respective successors .... to have and receive in lieu and exchange of and for the glebe and tithes, a yearly rent or annuity in money .... by reason of which exchange, the income of the said rectories would be considerably increased" .... and not only "that the carrying the said agreement into execution will be very beneficial to the present and future rectors of the said several parish churches of W——— and W———, and be an improvement of the revenue of the said rectories and churches' but also that it would be '*a manifest advantage to all the parties.*' And therefore it settled 100*l.* a year upon each rector and his successors in lieu of the glebe and tithes, and this stipend is all which each living now yields.

"But what would have been the present yearly value of the living of W———, if this commutation had not been made ?

"The tithes of 1200 acres of arable and grass land (exclusive of glebe), at 6s. per acre, are worth	£360	0	0
Do. of 450 or 500 acres of wood lands, comparing their recent valuation with that of the arable and grass lands ..	50	0	0
Sixty acres of glebe at 25*s.* per acre .	75	0	0
Yearly value of the living	£485	0	0"

Or the whole living would have been worth nearly five times its present value. "I have no doubt," my

informant adds, "that there is a similar disproportion in the other parish between the money payment and the actual value of the tithes and glebe."

Now I cheerfully admit that the recent Act provides for the commutation of tithes upon terms more favourable to the Clergy. It gives the Clergyman the advantage of any increase in the price of grain, and, instead of taking away the glebe, it permits (for the redemption of the tithe-rent) twenty acres to be added to it. But what would have been the result had the principle of the Tithe Act been adopted in the above-mentioned case.

Supposing the rent of the glebe in 1748 to have been but 5*s.* the acre, and setting the composition accordingly, we have 85*l.* as the composition for tithes at that time. Fixing then the commutation rent upon the principle of the Tithe Act, according to the average prices of the seven years preceding 1748 [1], we have 85*l.* divided into three equal parts,

[1] According to Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, Appendix, No. 3, the average prices were as follows:

YEAR.	WHEAT PER QR.	BARLEY DO.	OATS DO.
1741	£1 17 6	———	———
1742	1 7 6	0 17 6	0 13 6
1743	1 1 6	0 17 6	0 14 6
1744	1 0 0	0 12 0	0 10 6
1745	0 19 0	0 13 6	0 14 0
1746	1 0 0	0 11 0	0 13 0
1747	1 8 6	0 10 0	0 6 9

This will make the average of wheat, £1. 4*s.* 10¼*d.*; barley, 14*s.* 1¼*d.*; and oats about 12*s.* 3*d.* The price of barley and

purchasing about $22\frac{3}{4}$ qrs. of wheat, 40 qrs. of barley, and 46 qrs. of oats, which being again converted into money according to the average prices at which the conversion is now to be made, as fixed by statute 1 Vict. c. 69[1], yield but 178*l.* or less than half the present value of the tithes. And if to this sum be added 75*l.* as the present rent of the glebe, which the Tithe Act would have left untouched, the whole would have been little more than half of what the living would have been worth had there been no commutation. Nor is there any peculiarity in the circumstances of that living, unless that 60 acres is above the average extent of glebes. If therefore the Tithe Act had passed in 1748, instead of 1836, *and continued unrepealed*, we may see what great injury the property of the Church would have sustained. Thus, when one century from the present time shall have elapsed, (to say nothing of intermediate mischiefs), the Church may have been stripped of one half of her present revenues.

Such appears to be the real state of the case; and I respectfully submit that neither Clergy nor Laity should take any part in this commutation without protest or remonstrance. Perhaps they fear it will be cast in their teeth, that they have already commenced this work, or that they have suffered the

Oats not being stated for 1741, I have reckoned it for that year at the price of the succeeding year.

[1] Wheat 7*s.* $0\frac{1}{4}$*d.* the bushel; barley, 3*s.* $11\frac{1}{2}$*d.* the bushel; oats, 2*s.* 9*d.* the bushel.

Bill to pass into a law without opposition; but those who now use this argument will be the first to deny its force, when they feel the difficulties which the Tithe Act introduces in the transfer of property. The rights of the Clergy are sacred by the principles of our Constitution; they are carefully guarded in the Coronation oath of the Sovereign; and I cannot but think that even now they must be respected, be they few or many who are determined never to surrender them. Let it be remembered that our private interest is not the chief thing at stake; but that, as trustees for the Church and guarding the interests of our parishes, we call upon the British Legislature to redress this public wrong. If the nation were determined to rob the Church, there might be reason for despair: but whenever any measure injurious to the Church has been fully discussed by the public, it has almost invariably been amended or abandoned. An apparent victory may have been obtained by our opponents; but always ended in their virtual defeat. The Tithe Act passed almost *sub silentio;* why then should not the Legislature reconsider a measure fraught[1] with evil to Church and State, when it often alters a law which

[1] Those who consider the question relating to the Church property settled by the Tithe Act, are referred to the following warning: "It is a fact worthy of notice, that the records of history present few or no instances, in which the spoliation of property, devoted to literary or ecclesiastical purposes, has not

presses on private interests. If an individual sees that he has done wrong, will he not repair that wrong; and shall the legislature of this great nation be less just than an individual? *Is the decision of a judge relating to a question of assessment to be reconsidered?* And cannot the High Court of Parliament retrace its steps in a question of such vital importance? *Optima portus pœnitenti mutatio consilii est.* The Church has nothing to fear, except from those who see the evil, and, without protest or remonstrance, say it is too late to remove it.

"What," said Mr. Goulburn, "would have been now the condition of the country, if in the times of Henry and Elizabeth the government, in the enactments with reference to Church property, had said, We are friends to the Church—we limit its income: but think not we are its enemies, because we seek to prevent the improvement of the revenues of that Church; we will give to the Church all that it now possesses, we will secure it to the Church for ever. The policy of the noble Lord would go to deprive whole districts, cities, towns, and counties, throughout Great Britain, of adequate funds for the religious instruction of the people. If such had been

failed, *first, to accomplish the benefit which was avowed as the cause of interference with it; and secondly, to be stayed within the limits contemplated by those who advised it.*"—Dr. Hawk's Eccl. Hist. of Virginia, as quoted in the British Critic, No. 40. p. 284.

the course at the time of which the noble Lord had spoken, instead of being the best conducted, this country would have held a very different station among the nations of the earth, and would have been bowed down in a state of wickedness and weakness, arising from the absence of a fit religious instruction of its people[1]." Where are we to find a stronger condemnation of the Tithe Act; or a more convincing proof that its real bearing was not sufficiently considered by those members of the legislature, whom you describe as having a right to speak in the name of the Church. The sentiments which I have quoted were expressed by an individual, but they are held by the most influential party in the House of Commons, and who are pledged by their principles to preserve the rights of the Church inviolate. It was to this subject also that Lord Stanley directed attention, when he used those memorable and statesmanlike words, NEVER FOR ANY CAUSE OR ON ANY OCCASION AFFIRM A PRINCIPLE WHICH YOU DO NOT BELIEVE, OR REFUSE TO AFFIRM A PRINCIPLE IN WHICH YOU DO BELIEVE[2]. Viewing the speech of Mr. Goulburn, in connection with those words of the noble Lord, which were responded to when uttered, by three hundred members of the legislature, I have yet to learn that this public wrong is irreparable.

[1] Times Newspaper, May 4th, 1838.

[2] Speech at Merchant Tailors' Hall, May 12, 1838.

Having directed your attention to this virtual condemnation of the Tithe Act, pronounced by the most influential party in the legislature, let me produce testimony that it is not in accordance with the feelings of the people. At a meeting held at Chelmsford, in March 1837, convened exclusively by the laity to consider the question of Church rates, and most numerously attended by persons of all ranks; after many able speeches, upholding the rights of the Church, Sir Brook Brydges thus expressed himself; "*It has always been my boast and pride, that before I can spend a single farthing which I receive from the land, a portion of these receipts has gone to the honour of my God. I will say that if we, as a nation, or as individuals, whether as persons dissenting from the establishment, or as belonging to the establishment, do not endeavour to deserve that blessing which I read in my Bible, is promised to those who honour God with their substance, and give to his service the first fruits of their increase*[1], *we may expect to receive from Him a curse instead of a blessing*[2]." I was myself a witness to the enthusiastic reception of these words by the assembled multitude. And why, I ask, may not this spark be fanned into a flame? Why should we despair of our cause? Why distrust our countrymen? Why not indulge the fond hope that the feeling which I have proved to

[1] Prov. iii. 9. Mal. iii. 8, 9.

[2] Essex Herald April 4, 1837.

exist, may gather strength, and ripen into a general principle of repentant action?

Other evidences are not wanting to show that the spoliation principle of the Tithe Act is not that of the people at large. In almost every diocese we see numerous and influential bodies of men, not seeking to deprive the Church of her revenues, but showing anxiety to increase them. For this purpose meetings are held, societies are formed, and curates' funds established. Surely this anomalous state of things cannot last; the real bearing of the Tithe Act must ere long be discovered, and men will be ashamed of the inconsistency of providing fresh churches and curates with the one hand, and robbing those in existence with the other.

"The population," you say, "is increasing fast: the national wants which that fund is to satisfy are increasing with the population; every circumstance which tends to shrivel and diminish such a fund, increases the probability that the time is at hand when it may become inadequate to the wants of the multiplied people (p. 64.)." I entirely agree with you; and I would call your attention to the peculiarly mischievous effects of the Tithe Act in populous districts. In my parish, with a scattered population of 2000 inhabitants, there is one church and one chapel, and another chapel (which I hope will shortly be built) is required; the whole actual income, including the endowment of the chapel,

amounting to about 430*l.* per annum. The living is a Vicarage; and, from the present system of cultivating land, is probably rather increasing in value. Nor is there anything singular in the circumstances of my living; in the neighbourhood there are two other parishes, where additional clergymen are required, while the value of the livings is not sufficient to support them. There are others, in the same condition, near a place with which you are connected, and many will be discovered in the Parliamentary Returns of benefices. But what principle can sanction the alienation of any Church property, where it is already so insufficient for the proper service of the Church?

"I have never had a scruple," said the Bishop of London, at a late meeting at Chelmsford, of the Essex Association for building and enlarging churches and chapels.—"I have never had a scruple of asserting, fearlessly, that it is the sacred duty of the government of every Christian country, to preserve and propagate Christianity; it is their duty to provide the people with the means of public worship, edification, and grace. This formerly was specifically acknowledged by the Legislature; of late years it has been contested, but, I believe that the *sense of the people is so strongly expressed in favour of my doctrine*, that I am not without hope, before long, a fresh recognition of the principle may be looked for at the hands of govern-

ment. That it will be an effective recognition at once, I do not believe, but I shall be satisfied if it is a distinct recognition; but whether it be as full as we desire, or a bare admission of the principle, we must, to insure it, do all in our power to satisfy the Legislature that we are in earnest in demanding it[1]." Nor has the Bishop miscalculated the feelings of the people. A numerous meeting, attended by fifteen members of Parliament, was recently held in London, on the subject of national education and Church extension. The principle which you have yourself recognised, that the general government is bound to find a fund for the religious instruction of the people, was strongly enforced at this meeting; the first resolution declaring "that the meeting was deeply convinced that one leading cause of the existing deficiency in the means of education, is to be found in the neglect by the Legislature, of making the Church Establishment co-extensive with the growing numbers of the people, and of adjusting the parochial system thereto; that for this reason, but much more for others of a still *higher* and *holier* obligation, this meeting calls upon the Legislature to resume the discharge of that great duty, which, at no remote period, it partially acknowledged, *by annual grants of money, for the improvement of small livings*, and by voting sums for

[1] Essex Standard, October 19, 1838.

the erection of new Churches." Lord Sandon, in speaking to this resolution, is reported [1] to have laid down the following propositions: "First, That the Clergy are wholly identified with the national education: Secondly, that the deficiencies of the Church should be supplied by the State, and that the number of Church endowments should be aided by the State, as well as by individuals connected with the Church herself." The meeting unanimously agreed that a petition, embodying these principles, should be presented to the House of Commons by Lord Ashley and Lord Sandon; and the other honourable members present were requested to support it. But, if it is the duty of the Legislature to provide additional means for the spiritual instruction of the people, much more is the Legislature bound to preserve such means as are already in existence; and if the sense of the people is so strongly expressed in favour of the doctrine laid down by our Bishop, it will be so for the repeal or amendment of the Tithe Act, when the merits of the case are understood. If the Legislature will listen to an earnest demand in the one case, it will not surely be deaf to earnest and respectful petitions in the other. We ask for no grant of public money; we only petition that the property which has been appropriated, *and is required,* for the spiritual instruction

[1] St. James's Chronicle, February 12, 1839.

of the people, may not be made over to the landholders, who, we believe, do not desire it. Let the people of England beware how they violate charters by which that property has been consecrated to God. "We have given to God both for us and for our heirs for ever," is the language of many of those grants; and the same words *stand foremost* in the great Charter of our civil liberties[1]. Let the pious will of our forefathers be religiously fulfilled. The endowments of the Church were not designed for one age, but in perpetuity for the service of Religion. Why should they be divested of their permanent and substantial character[2]? To those who acknowledge the rights of property, and respect the privileges of their fellow citizens, we appeal upon the ground of justice, and the principles of the Constitution. To those who acknowledge that Church property is sacred, we appeal in the language of a Father of our Church, "Why should we presume to deal with God, worse than God hath allowed any man to deal with us.... The time it may be will come, when they that either violently

[1] "First we have given to God and by this our present Charter have confirmed for us, and our heirs for ever, that the Church of England shall be free, and shall have all her whole rights and liberties inviolable"—Magna Charta, 9 Hen. III.

[2] "They have ordained that the provisions of this establishment should be stable as the earth on which it stands, and should not fluctuate with the Euripus of funds and actions."—*Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France.*

have spoiled, or thus smoothly have defrauded God, shall find they did but deceive themselves. In the meanwhile, THERE WILL BE ALWAYS SOME SKILFUL PERSONS, WHICH CAN TEACH A WAY HOW TO GRIND TREATABLY THE CHURCH WITH JAWS THAT SHALL SCARCE MOVE; AND YET DEVOUR IN THE END MORE THAN THEY THAT COME RAVENING WITH OPEN MOUTH, AS IF THEY WOULD WORRY THE WHOLE IN AN INSTANT[1]."

In the recent debate on the Ecclesiastical Revenues Bill[2], Lord John Russell, on the strength of the two per cent addition of which you speak, asserted that the Tithe Act had improved the incomes of the clergy; forgetting that this small and temporary addition, which they might have obtained without the Act but for their own moderation, has been counter-balanced by the permanent decrease of their property to a much greater extent. He informs us that the Tithe Commissioners have confirmed 2190 agreements, but makes no mention of the numerous cases in which the business has been here suspended[3]. Had he considered with Mr. Phillpotts, the "*spirit of agitation which every*

[1] Hooker, Ecc. Pol. V. 7. and 79.

[2] House of Commons, Feb. 25, 1839.

[3] It appears by a return laid before the House of Commons, dated 20th February, 1839, that the work of commutation had commenced, by notice of meetings, in 8454 cases, and been completed, by confirmation of the apportionments, in but 239 cases!

friend of the National Church must deplore ;" or seen your "*table covered with the complaints of the Clergy,*" he would hardly have asserted that the Clergy were under the Tithe Act, "receiving a certain income without dispute." He condemns the Tithe system because it yielded an uncertain income; forgetting the advantage of the clergyman's sharing with his parishioners the good or evil of an abundant or scanty crop. "It caused," he says, "their stipends to be less according to the kindness and indulgence of the incumbents in remitting their tithes; and it caused their incomes to rise, according to the strictness with which other incumbents exacted their rights." And does he not know that the tithe rent, being fixed according to the last seven years' composition, will be high or low, according as the incumbents have been liberal or strict? Thus that temporary evil of the Tithe system is made perpetual by the Commutation; while the clergyman will no longer have the same opportunity of gaining the good will of his parishioners by his liberality.

In the same debate, Sir Robert Peel observed, that he "should give to any project for the diversion of one single shilling of Church property to any other than strictly spiritual and ecclesiastical purposes, his most decided opposition." How then can he approve of the commutation which allows nothing for the future increase of tithes? The Right Hon. Bart. enforced the necessity of providing

additional incomes for the poorer livings, there being 3528 benefices with less than 150*l.* a year. How then can he approve of the commutation by which the improvement of these livings is prevented[1]? I would here suggest that, if the Tithe Act must be retained on our Statute Book, it might be provided, according to the principle of Mr. Goulburn's Act for compositions for tithes in Ireland, (4 Geo. IV. c. 99.) that there should be a new commutation every twenty-one years at the desire of either party; being in every case according to the actual value of the tithes at the time. There is much to learn from the caution of that Act, though more, perhaps, from its result. For my part, I fear that those who cannot be reconciled to Tithes will very soon object to the existence of an Established Church. No permanent good can be expected to result, when we sacrifice the just interests of future generations in seeking peace for ourselves; "making a feast for the present age, and a famine for posterity[2]."

[1] See the case of the living of W——, *ante*, p. 36.

[2] "The History of Waltham Church," says Fuller, is the Church History of England," and the following extract from his account of Waltham illustrates his meaning: "Anno 1563. For an old house in the market-place, 13*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* This tenement, low-rented, yielded annually nine shillings. Now the parish sold it (and another house in West Street), outright, letting leases also of their other Church lands for twenty-one years. SUCH BARGAINS MADE A FEAST FOR THE PRESENT AGE, AND A FAMINE FOR POSTERITY."

In conclusion, I may state, that with my strong convictions, not formed hastily, respecting the unjust and irreligious principle, and ruinous tendency of the Tithe Act, I doubt whether I ought not, as a duty which I owe to myself, to my successor, to my parish, and to my country, to carry my opposition of it to the utmost extent. I have petitioned Parliament that my parish may be exempted from its operation during my incumbency; and I trust that my case will receive that kind consideration from the legislature, which I feel assured it will meet with at your hands.

I remain, Reverend Sir,

Your faithful and obedient Servant,

CHARLES MILLER.

Harlow Vicarage,
March 8, 1839.

LONDON :
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

THE CHURCH AND THE EDUCATION QUESTION.

REMARKS

ON THE

CHURCH'S OPPOSITION

TO THE

GOVERNMENT PLAN

OF

NATIONAL EDUCATION.

By A CHURCHMAN.

LONDON:
HENRY HOOPER, 13, PALL MALL EAST.
1840.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY IBOTSON AND PALMER, SAVOY STREET, STRAND.

REMARKS, &c.

THE time has arrived when the House of Commons will be called upon, by the present liberal ministry, to vote a further instalment towards the great educational debt which Tory governments had incurred, and for years accumulated, to the people of this country.

Public attention is hourly becoming more anxiously directed to the question, and an apprehension begins to arise that it will again be made a rallying point for another of those party struggles, to which the Opposition in parliament are constantly sacrificing the vital interests of the nation. I am, therefore, induced to give publicity to the following brief remarks, in the hope that, coming from no enemy of the Church of England, but, on the contrary, from one who regards that institution as eminently calculated, in its purity, to promote the temporal, no less than the spiritual welfare of the community, they may not be wholly without effect on many

who are known to be gradually escaping from the mist of error into which they had been too successfully led on this topic, to the atmosphere of sounder reason and safer counsels.

I am not about to enter upon the already exhausted field of general discussion on the education question, but shall confine my observations to that branch of it which has now become the most prominent, viz., the part taken by the Established Church in resisting the government plan. I shall endeavour to show that the claims put forward by the clergy are untenable; that to accede to them would prove detrimental to the cause of public instruction; and that the manner in which they have been urged has tended to injure the Establishment.

The position first assumed by the Church was that of openly demanding for her own members the sole benefit of the funds voted by parliament. It is well known that the strong demonstration of opinion against so palpable an injustice speedily produced a qualification in the terms of the demand. It was then said, with the specious pretence of some slight liberality, "We do not wish to exclude any individual from a participation in the grant, but ours is the national church; we are, therefore, the only authorised directors of public teaching, and as such, we have a right to the superintendence of any system of national education." This proposition is unsupported by

anything in the civil or ecclesiastical constitution of the Establishment, is fraught with the same spirit of exclusion which was more openly displayed in the assertion of a title to the whole of the grant, and is opposed to the simplest sense of justice and the soundest principles of toleration.

In the first place, for what purpose is a national church instituted? The answer is shortly given by Paley, in language which cannot be too often repeated, when the Church is set up, by her self-styled champions, as an antagonist in every arena of political strife. He says, "whenever we deliberate concerning ecclesiastical establishments, the single end we ought to propose by them is, *the preservation and communication of* RELIGIOUS *knowledge*. Every other idea, and every other end that have been mixed with them have served only to debase the institution, and to introduce into it numerous corruptions and abuses."

The preservation and communication of *religious* knowledge is, then, the single end for which the Church is established. This is the only branch of public instruction which peculiarly belongs to the clergy in their canonical character. All the temporal advantages to society proceeding from the maintenance of a national establishment for religion, are to be traced to the indirect influence of spiritual

teaching, and constitute no argument whatever for making the clergy the governors of secular schools.

It is certainly true that some recognition of the clergy as the authorised teachers of the people "*generally*," and not simply in religion, may be discovered in the black-letter records of laws long become obsolete, and passed in early periods of darkness, when the priesthood was almost the only educated class of society. In those times the clergy were, for the same reason, necessarily appointed to various offices, requiring a degree of mental capacity which they alone possessed. If we are to be guided by the precedents and practices of these bygone days, we must place the ministers of religion on the judicial bench, and in numerous situations of temporal trust and government; appointments which there is no reason to suppose they would repudiate, when we see their imprudent eagerness to become justices of peace, and the activity which they too often display in electioneering and other secular affairs.

If we examine the best authors on the constitution and character of ecclesiastical institutions, we shall find that the ministers of the churches are deemed to be as much set apart for *religious* instruction as are the professors of any other department of learning. This especial and complete separation of the clerical order from

the rest of the community for the performance of holy functions, forms the groundwork and consideration of all the endowments and provisions which the bounty of individuals and the policy of the state have from time to time secured for their support. The prominent argument urged by the Church for maintaining the inviolability of her property, has always been, that the spiritual duties of her ministers are so weighty and all-engrossing as entirely to preclude them from profitably applying themselves to any other pursuits. I scarcely know one clergyman, who, when the apparent ease and leisure of his life is alluded to, will not dilate on the constant and unceasing employment of his mental and physical energies in the discharge of his pastoral obligations, and tell you that hardly a moment of his time is disengaged. If this be a true representation, as it is, no doubt, in many cases, and ought to be in all, would it not be the height of folly to entrust to a body of men so pre-occupied, the arduous task of superintending *general* public instruction? Surely there cannot be a stronger reason for placing it in the hands of an efficient body of responsible *lay* officers, whose time and talents can be closely devoted to it.

But, then, it is said, that no system of national education ought to be established, of which religious instruction does not form an integral part.

To this proposition I readily assent—nay, I will even go so far as to declare, that by giving to the lower classes mere secular knowledge, wholly unguided and uncontrolled by early-inculcated religious principles, we should, I much fear, be inflicting an evil, instead of conferring a blessing, on society. Does it, however, follow, that the clergy of the Church of England must be the heads of public instruction? Religion can only form one, though an inestimably important branch of the routine of daily teaching in the school. A considerable portion of the allotted time must be taken up in communicating the rudiments of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and the simplest elements of the most practical sciences. The preceptor in any of these departments might as well take upon himself the teaching of religion, as the professor of religion, as such, assume the conduct of the general instruction. In this view of the subject, the ministers of any denomination of religion have not a superior claim to the control of the schools; but, *à fortiori*, it cannot be sustained in favour of those only who belong to the Church of England.

Without wishing to detract from the talent and ability of the clergy, I cannot avoid entertaining a strong doubt, whether their peculiar calling and habits of life do best qualify them for directing an education which is to make the

rising generation not merely moral and virtuous, but also useful and active citizens of a free and enterprising nation.

There is an insuperable objection against yielding to the demands of the church to be found in the effect, which it will inevitably have, of diminishing the extent of improvement fairly derivable from the parliamentary grant, were it administered in the truly catholic and tolerant spirit of benevolence which allows of no respect of persons. If the control of a national system of education is placed in the hands of the church, an incalculable number of the dissenting population will be as completely excluded from the schools, as if their positive disqualification formed an express article of the regulations. We have the example before us of the "National Society." What constitutes the well-defined line of demarcation between that institution and the "British and Foreign Society?" The fact that the former is under the control of the church, the latter not. The "National Society" is only the prototype of any establishment for general education which may be placed under similar superintendence. The Bishop of Exeter says, "Let no child be compelled either to attend divine service in the church, if his parents object to it on an alleged scruple of conscience, or to learn the catechism, or anything else to which the parents may object on similar grounds, in any school maintained wholly or partially by

the state." Can any one suppose that this will obviate the objection, and induce the large mass of nonconformists to accept the instruction which the church will offer? It bears the semblance without the reality of conciliation; it leaves the invidious distinction between the church and the dissidents unmitigated; it affixes a badge of inferiority, in form if not in fact, on those who at certain seasons would be obliged to retire from a participation in the instruction afforded, while it perpetuates amongst the youthful population all the feelings of sectarian animosity which are as detrimental to the cause of true religion as they are injurious to our social relations.

The evils which I have just mentioned, as irresistibly resulting from a concession to the church of the control of the education grant, are not only evidenced by past experience, but are felt and expressed by the Bishop of London. In his speech in the House of Lords, when the majority of that assembly exhibited themselves to the world as the obstructors of popular enlightenment, under the display of an overweening ardour for religion, the Right Rev. Prelate said: "If there be any, AND MANY NO DOUBT THERE ARE, *who will refuse to accept the education we offer them*, let them seek instruction according to their own views and methods. *Let them be assisted by the state* if the necessity should arise, *but let it be done in the way of*

CHARITY to the dissidents from our church, not as a matter of right."—Charity indeed! Was there ever such a perversion of the term, unless his spiritual lordship meant to refer to that description of charity which emphatically "begins at home?"

Any observations upon the mockery of calling by the imposing term of "*National* Education," a system of public instruction thus confined to a mere section of the people, are wholly unnecessary. The practice of drawing from the resources of all classes without distinction, a revenue which is afterwards to be monopolised by a few, is already so grievously felt in the instance of the church itself, as to provoke loud complaining. This apparent injustice may be inherent in the very nature of a *state church*, and for that reason is tolerated by many persons, who are advocates for ecclesiastical establishments; but its extension to a *state education* is not to be maintained by any similar arguments, and will never be submitted to by the dissenting community.

The two extracts just given from the speeches of the Bishops of London and Exeter, show the inconsistency of the attack on the government plan of education. The loudest outcry was raised against what was denominated the unholy separation of *spiritual* from *secular* education; and the government were falsely charged with a desire to discourage the former, and leave it to

chance, while the latter was to be fostered with the utmost assiduity. Now such a separation is not only sanctioned, but recommended, by these right reverend prelates, with reference to the children of dissenters, while they deem it so dangerous to the souls of the children of the church. They anticipate that many there will doubtless be who will refuse to accept the religious education offered by the church, yet they are to be left to seek such instruction, wherever they can find it, "according to their own views and methods." All that episcopal piety will do for them is, to disclaim any intention of *compelling* them to receive the unpalatable food, instead of endeavouring to supply them with that of which all can partake without offending the feelings or prejudices of any, and without compromising the great principles of common Christianity.

That a plan of national education, comprising all denominations of Christians, is not only practicable but consistent with true religion, is proved by numerous examples at home and abroad, particularly by the well-known instance of the schools now in full activity at Liverpool; and is forcibly urged in the following short extract from a letter of the liberal-minded Bishop of Norwich, just published, in answer to the Bishop of Calcutta. The Bishop of Norwich says, "Practical observation and experience have strengthened my conviction, that the children of different christian denominations may, by judicious management, be

taught *without sinking in general instruction any evangelical doctrine on which salvation depends;* and I would endeavour so to do, from no disposition to "compromise the gospel," but from an earnest desire to put an end to feuds and animosities daily increasing, and assuming a malignity of character fatal to the progress of vital Christianity amongst us; fatal to its becoming that bond of affection and love between man and man, which it ought to be, and might be, if the contending parties in and out of our church, would seek to neutralise their differences by *dwelling more exclusively on the fundamental points of Christian union.*" Such sentiments do honour to the source from whence they emanate. In what grateful and striking relief does this estimable man stand forth from nearly all his episcopal contemporaries on the subject of national education!

Another favourite argument adduced by the Church against the government scheme, was that the state is bound to withhold all aid, both direct and indirect, from every educational institution in which the religion of the Established Church is not exclusively taught. This, as an abstract proposition, had some plausibility, and succeeded in misleading several churchmen, who could not clearly divest their minds of the fallacy so craftily inculcated, that *general* education and the church are so inseparably connected, as properly to make the former a "*church ques-*

tion." It would be superfluous to recapitulate here the numberless instances in which the state has abandoned this supposed obligation, in order to show that, however attractive in theory, it is unsound and cannot be followed in practice, in a country where toleration is something more than a name. The able and forcible speeches of Lord John Russell and Mr. Spring Rice in the House of Commons, on the education question, are conclusive on this point; but I cannot refrain from quoting the following passage from Mr. Gladstone's well-known book on "Church and State." He says,

"The aid of the state is now given to schools of two kinds—those in connexion with the incorporated National Society, and those under the British and Foreign School Society. The former follow *Bell*, the latter *Lancaster*. The former give a *definite church education*, teaching the *Catechism*, using prayer, and *require attendance at the public worship of the church:* the latter adopt the Bible as their basis of religious instruction, ostensibly renouncing exposition of a controversial, or what we should rather call a doctrinal kind. They do not recognise distinctions of religious communion. *The principle* of this grant for schools is *greatly short of* A FULL CHURCH PRINCIPLE, and yet *does not positively contravene it;* first, because it absolutely disclaims all sectarian teaching; *secondly, because* SCHOOLS ARE NOT SO ENTIRELY

APPROPRIATED TO RELIGION *as to require the whole system of the church in the same degree with those institutions which have no other end, and are the paramount means for the attainment of that end.*"

It thus appears that the appropriation of part of the national revenue to the encouragement of a system of education, *not under the control of the church*, is no innovation, but has long been acted upon. The closing sentence of the foregoing extract distinctly, though somewhat reluctantly, admits that education is not substantially and legitimately a "church question." I hail this admission, coming from such a source, with much satisfaction, because it strongly confirms the view which I have previously taken, while it at once destroys the foundation upon which the violent opposition of the church was mainly sustained.

What the talented and conscientious member for Newark here calls a "*full church principle*," is nothing less than persecution and intolerance in the most unqualified shape. Such a doctrine is consistently advanced by him and others, who entertain extreme opinions on ecclesiastical matters; but it is far better adapted to the days of Laud than to the present age.

In a tract like the present, devoted to the purpose of showing that the demand by the church of the control of a national system of

education ought not to be acceded to, it would be an omission not to advert to Lord Brougham's recent "Letter" to the late lamented Duke of Bedford "on National Education." His lordship's object there is, to advocate the policy of such a concession. He is far from admitting the right or justice of the demand, but deems that the cause of popular enlightenment would be more advanced by yielding to than by longer resisting it.

Expressed in all the fervid eloquence of his lordship's style, the pamphlet is unusually powerless in carrying conviction of the wisdom of the surrender which his lordship recommends, and it seems also to proceed on an unaccountable misapprehension or forgetfulness of fact. Alluding to the debate and division in the House of Lords on the Archbishop of Canterbury's motion against the government measure, his lordship says,—"*All intolerance*, all compulsion upon the dissenters, all claim of the church, to exclude them *directly or indirectly* from the benefits of whatever education shall be patronised by the state, all desire to enforce upon them any observances contrary to their consciences, was most explicitly, and, I believe, most sincerely disavowed by every speaker, lay or spiritual, who bore a part in that celebrated debate." What extraordinary influence, to produce such a declaration as this, could have operated upon the

learned lord, between the 7th of July, the day of that debate, and the 6th of September, the date of his lordship's "Letter," I am at a loss to conceive. To my mind the debate exhibited the very quintescence of high-church intolerance. Such, too, appears to have been his lordship's own opinion *at the time;* for in his speech on that occasion, in reply to the sentiments which had been uttered by the spiritual lords, I find the following:—"I must, however, call the attention of your lordships to the language used by the opponents of this measure. They allege that there is so trifling a distance for the dissenters to come over to the church, that it may be easily got over. Now this is the very language of the inquisition. The difference between you and me, says the inquisition, is slight, and of such a nature, that I may compel, force, or burn you into compliance. *Mine is the true faith—mine is the faith endowed by the state—the state patronises me—the state conscience is with me.* What right have you to complain of the gentle force I use towards you? If I asked you to turn Mahommedan, or to preach atheism, and threatened you with the rack and the faggot, you might indeed call me a persecutor; but I am doing no such thing. I am only asking you to do the most gentle thing in the world. I ask you to get over a trifle for which the Greek and Latin churches, in the age of folly, were mad enough

to persecute each other. There is only an iota of difference between us. Come then to us, rest on our bosom; it is for the good of your souls, and I will make it for the good of your bodies also. *Expanded into the language of the inquisition, this is the argument used by the right reverend bench.*"

If I wanted an additional reason for deprecating, as I have done, the propriety of giving way to the church on this question, I should find it in the noble lord's powerful exposure of the spirit which actuates her prelates in their hostility to the government measure, and would constantly create obstructions to the spread of liberal and useful public instruction.

One feature of the government plan which rendered it most objectionable in the eyes of the church and clergy, was the appointment of *efficient inspectors*. To every impartial mind this was amongst its chief recommendations. The state of uselessness and decay into which numbers of schools (many of them professedly attached to the church) had been allowed to fall, from neglect and misappropriation, is abundantly shown by the voluminous reports of the charity and other commissions. This evil arose from the want of a vigilant supervision. It was to obviate its recurrence, that the office of inspectors of the schools, founded or aided by means of the parliamentary grant, was proposed. The

resistance to such a regulation implied anything but an honest and upright intention. It was, therefore, pretended by the clergy, that these functionaries would be made to exercise a vexatious interference with the discipline and instruction of the establishments, and particularly with the form and principles of the religious branch of the education. In vain was this assertion repeatedly and authoritatively denied on the part of the committee of council. The people were, nevertheless, told by the church that atheism, infidelity, and lax morality, would be the inevitable consequence of admitting the government inspection. A more outrageous and unfounded misrepresentation was never indulged in. The time which has elapsed since the last session of parliament has afforded the most complete refutation of this calumny, by the appointment of the inspectors, and the publication of the instructions issued to them by the committee of the privy council. The two gentlemen selected for this important office are admitted, by all parties, to be most unexceptionable, and one of them is a clergyman of the Church of England. The directions contained in the letter addressed to them by Dr. Kay, " by order of the Committee of Council on Education," are dictated in the best spirit, and evince an anxious desire to conciliate all classes, and none more than the members and clergy of the Established Church. This can be best shown

by a few brief extracts. The Education Committee say, "You will be careful, at visits of inspection, to communicate with the *parochial clergyman,* or other minister of religion connected with the school, and with the school committee, or, in the absence of a school committee, with the chief promoters of the school, and will explain to them that one main object of your visit is to afford them your assistance in all efforts for improvement in which they may desire your aid; *but that you are in no respect to interfere with the instruction, management, or discipline of the school, or to press upon them any suggestions which they may be disinclined to receive.* When a system of inspection of schools is for the first time brought into operation, it is of the utmost consequence you should bear in mind that *this inspection is not intended as a means of exercising control, but of affording assistance,* the inspector having no power to interfere, and not being instructed to offer any advice or information excepting where it is invited.

"In adopting the regulations in the enclosed minutes respecting *religious* instruction, the Committee have refrained from enjoining any report on this head, with respect to schools in connexion with *the Established Church,* the National Society, and the British and Foreign School Society, *in order to allay unfounded*

apprehensions, and to afford the strongest security that *no interference with the duties peculiarly belonging to the spiritual teachers is intended by the inspection of schools.* Their lordships are, however, strongly of opinion that no plan of education ought to be encouraged, in which intellectual instruction is not subordinate to the regulation of the thoughts and habits of children by the doctrines and precepts of revealed religion. You will, therefore, willingly avail yourself of the opportunity of examining the religious instruction given in the schools, *whenever you are invited to do so by the parochial clergyman*, or other minister of religion connected with the school, or when there is no spiritual superintendent, by the majority of the school committee or trustees."

The instructions display throughout a moderation and prudence which cannot be too much praised, and the ministers with whom this measure originated are entitled to the lasting gratitude of the British people. It is to be hoped that the example thus afforded of the judicious and admirable manner in which the Committee of Council have entered upon their deeply responsible duties of superintending the national education, will have the effect of bringing over to the side of reason, justice, toleration, and philanthropy, all those who have been hitherto misled; and that the sum about to be voted by

the House of Commons will be greatly more proportioned than it heretofore has been, to the exigencies of the case. The Church of Scotland has already given its influential sanction to this plan of government inspection, and so also have several exemplary clergymen and members of the Church of England.

It only remains for me to add how deeply to be deplored is the course taken by the great majority of the clergy, in opposition to the first advances ever made by the state for promoting national education. The best and most sincere friends of the Church now look upon that opposition with unfeigned regret. The formidable use made of it at all the meetings held to resist any further impost for Church extension, shows the injury which it has inflicted; and it is now discovered, when too late, that those ill-advised proceedings have only tended to weaken the hold which our venerable ecclesiastical establishment might, and ought to have, in the hearts and minds of the community, by inducing a suspicion, (not the less detrimental because it is erroneous,) that there must exist some extraordinary connexion between the perpetuation of ignorance and the continuance of a national church; and that her ordained ministers do not place so firm a reliance on the intrinsic purity and truth of her principles and tenets, as on the statutory and temporal privileges with

which she is favoured. By these means an increased encouragement has been given to the men who prophesy, with undisguised satisfaction, that which they unceasingly strive to accomplish, the overthrow of the Established Church at no distant period. Well may we exclaim to those who arrogate to themselves the title of the exclusive defenders of the Church, while they are thus furnishing weapons to her bitterest foes,

Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis.

THE END.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY IBOTSON AND PALMER,
SAVOY STREET, STRAND

THE

SCHOOLMASTER

IN

The Pulpit.

No. I.

CONTAINING

A SERMON ON FAITH AND SALVATION,

AND

A LECTURE ON THE BIBLE.

LONDON:

CHARLES FOX, 67 PATERNOSTER ROW,

1841.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY LEVEY, ROBSON, AND FRANKLYN,
23 Great New Street, Fetter Lane.

INTRODUCTION.

"THE Schoolmaster Abroad" is a meddling personage, and in his zeal to enlighten the public mind, behold him now even venturing into the pulpit. The clergy will doubtless frown upon him as an intruder, and exclaim contemptuously, "*Ne sutor ultra crepidam;* Let the pedagogue stick to his desk and his cane, and not presume to interfere with teachers of a higher order." But may he not justly plead in his own defence that they have themselves provoked this intrusion by *their* interference with *his* functions? "Have you not," he may ask, "set your faces against every scheme of popular education which does not include the inculcation of your own dogmas? Have you not insisted upon putting into the hands of the young, in schools for the poorer classes, the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible, as if that book comprised all needful knowledge, unmixed with any thing obsolete, or with any thing unsuitable for the instruction of the tender mind? Has not your cry for scriptural education been constantly a signal for party-strife, which has thwarted all my efforts for the improvement of mankind? In a work where all should heartily combine, has it not kindled hateful and mischievous dissension,—setting Protestant in array against Catholic, and churchmen in arms against dissenters? Is it not, then, high time for me to interfere to rescue the cause of education from such mismanagement? No longer can I submit with patience to the trammels imposed on me by narrow-minded religionists; and let the clergy frown upon me as they may, I will withstand their mind-enslaving system, and bring their oracle to a more searching scrutiny."

Education, it is allowed on all hands, is the grand engine of human improvement. But in order to be so, it must be rightly conducted, and this requires a correct knowledge of the laws of the human mind, and just views of man's condition, duties, and expectations. The task, then, of the schoolmaster is one which involves the highest of all subjects of inquiry; and on this ground he is clear from the charge of presumptuous interference with the province of the clergy in thus venturing for once to address himself to *adults*, and to address them on the subject of *religion*. If his teachings are opposed to those of the clergy, it is not to bring their order into contempt, but to give their labours a better direction, and to render them more efficient instruments for promoting the highest interests of mankind. His only aim, in short, is *truth;* his only objects of attack are *vice* and *error; fair argument* is his only weapon; and all he asks for is a *patient hearing*. The doctrines

put forth in these discourses will, doubtless, in some instances, offend the prejudices of Christian readers. But the schoolmaster would ill understand his vocation, did he seek to destroy the foundations of all religion. If he pulls down, it is only that he may build up something better; and while he labours to expose prevailing and long-established errors, he will anxiously endeavour to supply their place with a more rational system of moral and religious truth. His discourses, therefore, though characterised by the freest spirit of inquiry, will be far from encouraging unbounded scepticism, or the wanton disregard of all religious hopes and feelings. On the contrary, it will be their serious aim to inculcate such enlightened views of religion and such sound principles of morality as seem best fitted to ensure the improvement and well-being of mankind. They will necessarily contain a large intermixture of controversy, because error cannot otherwise be shewn to *be* error. But practical instruction will be their paramount object; and that instruction will be derived from the combined application of physiological and mental, ethical and political, science. To ascertain, in short, and teach, so far as he is able, the right means of improving the character of man, is the simple and earnest aim of him who here assumes the abstract character of the schoolmaster; and it is only in subservience to this end that he attempts to expose the futility of the means of improvement hitherto employed. In thus encountering long-established and fondly-cherished opinions, he cannot expect a candid attention from all; but those who thus far favour him, may be assured, that whatever he ventures to controvert, no ribaldry or coarseness, unworthy of so high a subject, shall offend them. At the same time, they must be prepared to go along with him in applying to *religion* that *fearless spirit of inquiry*, without which it cannot reasonably be expected that truth of any kind should be discovered. On that subject the public mind has too long slumbered; and while every other science has rapidly advanced, the science of human nature, that first and most important of all, has been stationary, because shackled with religious dogmas, and beset on every side with bugbears. Let us only have courage to think as freely and to reason as calmly on religion as on other subjects, and then, but not till then, may we reasonably expect to see the engine of education working with all its mighty influence for the improvement of our species.

Should the present publication, which is intended as the first of a series, be well received by the public, it will be followed at intervals by others of about the same size and price; and it is intended that each number shall consist, like the present, of two discourses,—one having the character of a sermon, and aiming to establish some useful or important moral or religious truth; the other being a critical lecture, discussing with freedom, but with fairness, the divine authority of the Bible. To what length the series may extend, it is impossible for the author at present to determine.

THE

SCHOOLMASTER IN THE PULPIT.

SERMON I.

ON FAITH AND SALVATION.

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?"—James ii. 14.

Is there any danger attending religious inquiries? This is a question which must be settled at the outset; because, where there is danger, there will be fear, and where there is fear, there cannot be dispassionate and sober judgment. Is there, then, I ask, any danger attending religious inquiries? Of course there is the danger, common to all inquiries, of our coming to wrong conclusions, which may mislead us in our practice. But is there any penalty attached to religious error more than to error of any other kind? Christian divines, with few exceptions, declare there is; for a certain faith, they say, is a necessary condition of salvation, and unless our inquiries lead us to this faith, they will lead us only to perdition. They do not absolutely forbid us to inquire, for that would be too plain an insult upon our understandings; but they do what they can to make us afraid of inquiry, by constantly telling us that, unless we receive a certain system of faith, which they say is proposed to us in the word of God, there is no hope for us in the day of judgment.

This limitation of God's favour to those of a certain creed is a notion not peculiar to Christians; for the followers of Mahomet, with equal confidence, maintain it in favour of *their* creed; and the Koran expressly declares, that "God will surely gather the ungodly and unbelievers into hell."* Mahometans, then, it appears, are deterred from the free exercise of their understandings in religion by the same apprehensions which deter Christians; and if, by this apprehension, the latter are retained in the *right* faith, how are the former to be blamed for being retained by the same motive in the *wrong* faith? Barbarians even congratulate themselves upon being the favour-

* Koran, ch. iv.

ites of heaven; and the swarthy African, whom Christians pity as an outcast heathen, returns the compliment by pitying white men as "a miserable and degraded race of mortals, doomed to the everlasting punishment of hell-fire after death, and in this life fit only for the company of dogs."* We smile with supreme contempt at such absurd manifestations of national prejudice and vanity; but in doing so, should we not wonder to find so close a resemblance to this narrow-minded bigotry in those who boast of being enlightened by the word of God?

This notion of salvation by means of faith has prevailed among Christians from the earliest periods of their history, but has assumed at different periods different forms. It appears to have been originally inherited from the Jews, and partook of the narrow character of its source. This people, among whom Christianity arose, had long considered themselves, on the ground of their descent from Abraham, and their acknowledgment and worship of the true Jehovah, as a holy nation, a peculiar people, chosen and favoured of God above all nations; and as the conceited Greeks looked down with contempt upon all other people as barbarians, so the spiritually-proud Jews stigmatized all foreigners as unclean, uncircumcised sinners, or Gentiles dead in trespasses and sins.† They alone were the favourites of heaven; they alone were to be raised from the dead at the Messiah's coming, to share in the expected glories of his kingdom, while all the rest of mankind were abandoned of God, and without hope of redemption from death, except by submitting to the law of Moses.‡ The primitive Christians altered this notion only so far as to establish the same privilege on a new and more extended ground. Instead of the old title to divine favour, founded on pure descent from Abraham, and strict observance of the Mosaic law, they substituted faith in Christ, that is, the belief that he was the

* See Paddock's Narrative of the Shipwreck of the Oswego on the coast of South Barbary, p. 148.

† "About the time when the Gospel was promulged, the Jews were greatly elevated on account of their distinguished privileges, and looked upon themselves as the only favourites of heaven, and regarded the rest of mankind with a sovereign contempt, as nothing, as abandoned of God, and without a possibility of salvation, unless they should incorporate in some degree or other with their nation. Their constitution, they supposed, was established for ever, never to be altered, or in any respect abolished. They were the true and only Church, out of which no man could be accepted of God; and consequently, unless a man submitted to the law of Moses, how virtuous or good soever he were, it was their belief he could not be saved."—*Taylor's Key to the Apostolic Writings*, c. v.

‡ See Milman's History of Christianity, vol. i. pp. 75, 76.

true Messiah, who, though he had suffered as a malefactor on the cross, had risen from the dead, and ascended into heaven, whence he would shortly re-appear in his true character, to put an end to the present world, and to establish an entirely new order of things. Not Jews, but Christians now, were the elect of God, the chosen generation, the holy nation, the peculiar people. To them alone belonged the hope of resurrection; for them alone was reserved a crown of eternal life, when Christ should come in the clouds of heaven to annihilate the mightiest powers of the earth, and to establish on their ruins his own glorious and happy kingdom. This second coming of Christ in glory they earnestly looked and waited for, as an event that would probably take place in their own lifetime; and when the Lord should descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, "the dead in Christ,"—that is, those believers whom death had seized before the realization of this hope,—were to "rise first," and then, says Paul, "*we who are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord*, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we be for ever with the Lord."* As this fond expectation died away through disappointment, other views of resurrection and salvation began to prevail. The resurrection from the dead, which, at first, was thought to be the peculiar privilege of believers,† came at length to be considered as the general destiny of all mankind; but believers were to rise to everlasting glory and happiness, unbelievers only to everlasting punishment. This notion, under various modifications, has maintained its ground among Christian churches to the present period, and though different churches and different sects have upheld different views of the essentials of the saving faith, all, with few exceptions, have set up some standard, and excluded from the pale of salvation those who fall short of it. Some few there are, who shrink from the thought of dooming to perdition that large portion of the world's population who have never heard the good tidings of the Gospel, and are willing to hope that these will be judged according to the light afforded them. But the Church of England sanctions no such tender-hearted lenity; for her eighteenth article plainly and stoutly declares that "they are to be held accursed who presume to say, that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law and the light of nature; for Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ

* See 1 Thess. iv. 15-18.

† See Locke's note on 1 Cor. xv. 42, in his Paraphrase of Paul's Epistles.

whereby men must be saved." Not content, moreover, with debarring the heathen from future salvation, Christians have even debarred one another for trifling differences among themselves. Each sect has set up its own peculiar views of Christian doctrine as essential to salvation, and Catholics have denounced Protestants, and Protestants Catholics; Episcopalians have denounced Presbyterians, and Presbyterians them, as furiously as they have all denounced the wicked unbeliever.

The only sect of Christians who do not join in these denunciations of unbelievers are the Unitarians, who, while they acknowledge the Bible as the record of a divine revelation, set forth no creed as indispensable to future salvation; but maintain that, in every nation and under every form of religious faith, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him. But these liberal believers, who thus open wide the doors of heaven to all, are refused by other sects the very name of Christians; for they reject, it is alleged, the essential doctrines of the Gospel, they deny the Godhead of the Saviour, they acknowledge not the atonement which he offered by his death for the sins of men, and thus disowning that which constitutes the very "head and front" of the Christian system, they are no better than infidels or heathens. It is indeed true that they take a totally different view of the whole design of revelation from that which is entertained by those called orthodox Christians. For, while the latter consider mankind as a doomed race, tainted from their birth with hereditary guilt, and subject thereby to a sentence of everlasting perdition, from the effects of which they are only to be rescued by that atoning sacrifice which Christ offered by his death on the cross; the Unitarians, who equally appeal to Scripture in support of their views, deny the lost state of man by nature, repudiate as utterly absurd and irrational the notion of vicarious punishment and imputed righteousness, and interpret the Gospel as merely a moral revelation which imparts better information concerning the character and designs of God than men were able to obtain by their unassisted reason, and offers for their guidance a higher and purer system of morality than the world had ever known, together with a living pattern of its excellence in the life and character of the *man* Jesus. According to this view of the matter, unbelief is only a negative evil, entailing no other penalty than such as naturally arises from ignorance of useful truth; and the salvation offered by the Gospel is nothing more than that deliverance from error and from vice, which is the natural result of superior instruction. Certainly these views of Christian doctrine are "wide as the poles asunder;"

and it cannot but excite the utmost wonder, that men who equally admit the divine origin of Christianity, and appeal to the same Scriptures as the oracle of truth, should thus disagree about the very scope and object of this alleged revelation. Can that be justly called a revelation which admits of such diversity of interpretation? Can that be indeed the instruction of an all-wise teacher which is so obscure or so ambiguous that even its main purport is a matter of dispute?

But let us judge for ourselves in this matter. Let us see how far the notion, that there is sin and danger attending unbelief, is sanctioned by that authority which should decide this controversy. There are certainly some very explicit declarations to this effect, and among these the following: "He who believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he who believeth not shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16). "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he who believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him" (John iii. 36). "Nor is there salvation by any other (than Jesus): for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we can be saved" (Acts iv. 12). But, on the other hand, there are texts equally explicit which may be cited in opposition to these, and in favour of more liberal views. "Of a truth," says Peter, "I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation, he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him" (Acts x. 34, 35). "When the Gentiles, which have not the law," observes Paul, "do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves" (Rom. ii. 14). "What doth it profit, my brethren," asks another apostle, "though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him?" Thus may we array Scripture against Scripture, and enlist it with every appearance of plausibility in defence of the most opposite opinions. In truth, there is no end to this bandying of Scripture texts; and theologians have been waging this kind of warfare for centuries without coming any nearer to the settlement of their disputes. Finding, then, such discordance among Christians themselves, as to the nature and extent of Gospel salvation, and such ambiguity, and even contradiction, in the authority which is appealed to for the decision of this vital question, what can we do but refer the matter to the judgment of common sense?

Common sense would ask, in the first place, how it consists with the character of a wise and just Deity, to make salvation dependent on conditions which necessarily exclude a large portion of mankind from all chance of obtaining it. For what is this faith which we are

told is the only saving faith? Faith in the contents of a volume which three-fourths of the world's population have never heard of. Faith in the contents of a volume which is not yet translated into half the languages spoken by mankind. Faith in the contents of a volume which has never been read by nine-tenths even of those who call themselves Christians, and which a very large proportion of the people in every Christian nation are absolutely unable to read. And even of those who are enabled to read it, how few are there who have read it thoroughly, or in such a manner as to be properly qualified for judging of its doctrines! Faith, to be of any value in the estimation of God, must surely be a rational faith, an enlightened conviction of the understanding, and not a mere blind assent to whatever education may chance to have implanted. And yet how very few there are who have any better reason for their Christian faith than that it is the faith which they have derived from their forefathers, and which their parents or religious instructors have instilled into them from their childhood! Supposing this to be the right faith, what merit can there be in holding it on such grounds, and how can Christians be supposed to find favour in the sight of God, who are such only for the same reason which makes the Turks Mahometans, and the Hindoos idolaters?

If the knowledge of what the Bible teaches be necessary for salvation, how utterly hopeless is the condition of the greater proportion of the human race, and what a prolific nursery of damned souls has this world been for ages past, and must continue to be for ages yet to come! For, reflect how many tribes of men there are in regions remote from European intercourse, who are not only precluded from this knowledge by their locality, but incapacitated for it by their profound ignorance; tribes to whom a written revelation, if offered to them, would be a dead letter, because they are unacquainted with written language itself; whose languages, too, are so poor and imperfect, that it would be utterly impracticable to translate the Scriptures into them, and whose untutored minds are absolutely as incapable as those of children of comprehending the ideas which the Christian missionary would have to offer them. The fate of ignorant barbarians like these may not appear a matter of much concern to theologians settling their points of faith, and carefully wording their saving creeds; but is it no imputation upon the wisdom of God to suppose that means of salvation provided by him,—means, observe, of a miraculous nature,—have now been published eighteen hundred years, and yet by far the greater part of mankind have been hitherto entirely unacquainted with them, and the greater part must

continue to be so for centuries yet to come? The case was one which required, if ever any did, a prompt and speedy remedy; for the devoted race of men were multiplying and dying under a sentence of everlasting punishment; and successive generations were brought into the world only to swell the numbers of the damned. Yet for ages nothing was done to alter this most frightful state of things; and when at last a Saviour came, armed with all the powers of omnipotence, he favoured with his presence but one small corner of the globe, unknown even now to more than half the world's inhabitants, and still saves only the select few to whom is imparted the mystery of redemption. Strange that a wise and good Creator has not long ago demolished a world, which, prolific only in vice and misery, adds hundreds to the population of hell for every single soul that it rears for the kingdom of heaven!

God, it is said, has given us a book which contains the sacred covenant of human salvation; and, whatever may become of the heathen who know it not, those who know it and reject it are inexcusable, because they reject what God himself has spoken. Surely, then, it is not unreasonable to presume that a book which is given for a purpose so important should be such as all who run may read; and if clearness and precision are qualities which we justly look for and approve in a human teacher, we have surely a right to expect these qualities in their utmost perfection in a divine instructor. And yet what is the fact? Even those who are most strenuous in holding up this volume as the word of God, and faith in it as necessary to salvation, cannot agree in stating what are its essential doctrines. The book, indeed, is so voluminous, and comprises such a variety of writings by different hands, of different ages, and of different character, that to study it thoroughly requires a degree of information and of leisure which falls to the lot of very few; and for the benefit of that large majority who are themselves unequal to this task, it has been found necessary to draw up certain formularies of faith, or short summaries of Bible doctrines. But even these formularies are so numerous and so various, that it is quite as difficult for the unlearned to ascertain from them the articles of saving faith, as to investigate the doctrines of the Bible for themselves. There is the creed called the Apostles' Creed, which is strictly Unitarian. There is the Nicene Creed, which is obscurely Trinitarian, but not damnatory nor Calvinistic. There is the Athanasian Creed, which is outrageously Trinitarian, and fiercely damnatory, yet still not Calvinistic. And there are the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England, which are at once Trinitarian, and damnatory, and Calvinistic.

Besides these, there are various other formularies, confessions, and catechisms, drawn up by different sects or churches, and differing more or less from one another. Now how shall the unlearned and the busy, who cannot study the Bible for themselves, determine, among these different summaries of faith, which is the safest for them to adopt? If they adopt the Apostles' Creed, which from its high antiquity seems the most deserving of respect, they exclude from their profession of faith the godhead of Christ and of the Holy Ghost, the doctrine of original sin, the doctrine of justification by means of the atoning sacrifice and imputed righteousness of Christ, which doctrines are represented by many as the most essential articles of the Christian faith. If they take the Nicene Creed for their guide, they will be taught to ascribe divine honours and worship to two other beings beside the Father Almighty; but they will not learn from this creed the strange jargon, unknown alike to Scripture and to common sense, of "one God in trinity, and trinity in unity;" nor will they learn any thing of the Calvinist's scheme of redemption, except the vague statement, that the Son of God "came down from heaven, and was made man, and was crucified for us men and for our salvation." Even if they take the Athanasian Creed for their guide, they will learn nothing of original sin, nothing of the atonement, nothing of the imputed righteousness and vicarious sufferings of the Saviour; but they will learn what is quite at variance with these doctrines, and inconsistent also with other declarations of the creed itself, that "they who *have done good* (not those whose faith is right) shall go into everlasting life, and they who *have done evil* (not those whose faith is wrong) shall go into everlasting fire." Perhaps the safest way is to adopt *all* these creeds and formularies of faith, for then we shall be pretty sure of having, notwithstanding a few contradictions, the right faith somewhere among them. This truly appears to have been the *prudent*, I cannot say the *enlightened* policy of the Church of England; for her liturgy contains all the three creeds I have mentioned, though they differ so widely from one another; and her thirty-nine articles are as much at variance with all her creeds as her creeds are at variance with each other. Seriously, my countrymen, what is this creed-making but a reflection upon the wisdom of God himself? What does it imply but that he has done his work in a bungling and imperfect manner, so that it requires to be corrected and completed by man? If God had intended to declare by his revelation, that a certain faith was necessary to save us from perdition, he would surely have given us a formulary of this kind himself; and instead of a large miscellaneous volume, in which the articles of

saving faith are buried in a mass of reading, where it is difficult for the most diligent inquirer to distinguish and select them from the various matter with which they are mixed up, he would have furnished us with something which *all* could read and understand with ease. When a *human* legislator attaches a certain penalty to a certain crime, he is justly expected to define that crime with all the precision of which language is capable. Surely, then, it is not to be supposed that a *divine* legislator would subject his creatures to an infinite penalty, without defining, with at least equal precision, the offence by which that penalty is to be incurred.

But let us now bring this notion of saving faith to a closer and more searching scrutiny. If by faith be meant the conviction of the understanding as to the truth of certain doctrines, or its belief of certain facts or statements, what can be more absurd than to hold out threats of punishment against the want of this conviction or belief? What reasonable person would ever think of appealing to the *fears* in order to work conviction on the *understanding?* What would you think, my countrymen, of the conduct of that man who should come to you with some wonderful story, and having told it, conclude with saying, "Believe me, or I'll knock you down?" Would not such a threat most justly excite suspicion of untruth, and would not your spirit rise indignant against so insulting an attempt to tyrannise over your mind? Yet, wherein would such conduct differ in principle from that imputed to a messenger from heaven, in saying, "He who believeth and is baptised shall be saved; but *he who believeth not shall be damned.*" Belief, as every one knows, is not a matter of choice. We cannot reasonably say to ourselves, "I will believe this," or "I will not believe that." We can only believe what comes recommended to our understanding by sufficient evidence; and when such evidence is presented to the mind, we need no threat of eternal damnation to make us believe, for we cannot in that case help believing. The appeal to fear, instead of serving, can only injure the cause in which it is employed; for it is reasonable to presume, that the cause which needs such aid is weak in better arguments. We cannot wonder that an impostor like Mahomet should have resorted to means of this description for the enforcement of his faith; but that the God of truth himself, or a messenger sent and authorised by him, should thus hold out the terrors of perdition to frighten us into the belief which he requires, is a notion which outrages all common sense.

But we may look at the matter in another point of view; for faith is a sentiment of the heart as well as a conviction of the under-

standing. In the one case it is the assent of the judgment to certain doctrines or statements, in the other it is the reliance of the heart upon the truthfulness or goodness of some person. It is, doubtless, faith of the latter kind which is chiefly recommended and cherished as the ground of Christian hope; and under the idea that mankind are a doomed and accursed race, faith assumes the endeared character of fond and grateful reliance upon a Saviour who intercedes for lost sinners with a wrathful God, and procures pardon and redemption for all who trust in him. But does not this faith in a divine *Saviour* involve the want of faith in a divine *Creator?* If the justice of the latter could not be satisfied without the punishment of a guilty race, the justice of the former should have been equally rigorous; and if the compassion of God the Son led him to intercede for doomed transgressors, the compassion of God the Father should have rendered such intercession needless. Put the matter into what shape you will, you cannot escape from this dilemma, that either the one was deficient in justice, or the other was wanting in mercy. A rational and enlightened faith in God would lead us to believe that he is not a capricious tyrant, whose only rule of conduct is his sovereign will and pleasure; but a wise, just, and good Being, who would not condemn countless millions for the offence of one, nor prolong the existence of an accursed race whose utter annihilation would be a deed of mercy. But men are prone to superstitious fears, and trembling under the apprehension of a wrathful and vindictive God, seek anxiously for means of appeasing him. Fear is at all times a bad reasoner, if indeed it ever reasons at all; and this fear of a wrathful deity, repressing the exercise of the understanding, leads to a reliance on means of salvation which have all the character of a charm. Formerly, the charm consisted in costly offerings, or bloody sacrifices, or pompous ceremonies; and if the victim slain was disfigured by any blemish, or the ceremony failed in any minute formality, the charm was broken and the labour lost. Now, the charm consists in the one great sacrifice which was offered once for all, by Jesus on the cross; and this charm is only efficacious to those who have received, from duly-authorized hands, the rite of Christian baptism. Yes; it is the sprinkling of water and the utterance of a certain mystical form of words, by priests to whom the power has been transmitted by ordination from the apostles, that constitutes, after all, the effectual charm. Faith, considered as the sober and enlightened conviction of the understanding, has little or no part in the matter; for what, in that case, would become of infants, who are manifestly incapable of rational faith by the natural weakness

and immaturity of their faculties? For the salvation of these, it is evident, some other spell than rational faith must be provided, and that spell, according to the doctrines of the Church of England, is baptism. In the authorized catechism of that church, the child is taught to say, that he is made by baptism "a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven;" and the rubric gravely assures us, "that children which are baptized, dying before they commit actual sin, are undoubtedly saved." Accordingly it is *prudently* enjoined, that "the curates of every parish shall often admonish the people that they defer not the baptism of their children longer than the first or second Sunday after their birth"—for fear, no doubt, lest the little innocents should miss salvation by dying before the performance of the holy ceremony! Is it really in the nineteenth century that drivelling like this can be seriously propounded to a thinking and enlightened people?

> Oh, judgment, thou art fled to brutish beasts,
> And men have lost their reason.

Let us only exercise our understandings on subjects of religion, my countrymen, with the same freedom with which we exercise them on other subjects, and these chimeras, which are worthy only of the darkest period of the dark ages, will vanish like distempered dreams. Let us look at human nature as it really is, and not as creeds represent it, and salvation such as dogmatists talk of will appear an idle word. 'Tis true, man is guilty, and God is just. But man's guilt is the necessary result of that frail nature which God has given him; and surely our Creator, who "knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust," will not require perfection from creatures made imperfect, nor visit with eternal perdition the errors of his short-sighted and half-reasoning offspring. Wrath and vengeance are as alien to the divine nature as they are inconsistent with the wise administration of human justice; and it is only superstition which arrays God in terrors, and seeks to allay its terrors by a charm. The salvation that we truly need is, not deliverance from a wrathful God, but deliverance from vicious habits, debasing ignorance, and demoralizing poverty; and such deliverance is only to be effected by the employment of natural means for modifying and improving human character. Ignorance is ever prone to overlook the natural, and resort to the miraculous; and in early ages, when science had not yet instructed mankind in the causes of natural phenomena, divine or supernatural agency was called in on every extraordinary occasion, and the pestilence, the earthquake, the tempest, the eclipse,

were imputed to offended divinities whose rites had been neglected, or malignant powers whose machinations had not been charmed away. In matters of this kind, however, mankind are now grown wiser; and as increasing knowledge has revealed the true causes of natural phenomena, the agency of gods, and demons, and fairies, has been more and more dispensed with, and spells and charms have fallen into discredit. But *moral* phenomena are still the occasion of similar superstition. The true causes of human guilt being overlooked or ill understood, it is considered as a sort of miraculous evil from which nothing but miraculous means can save. A superficial view of human nature exhibits so much wickedness, and reveals so little of the causes of that wickedness, that the notion has become rooted in the popular belief, of some perversion or degeneracy of human nature, which renders men unaccountably bent on wrong, and outcasts from the favour and regard of their Creator. We can all, indeed, account very well for our own delinquencies, for every man feels that the tenour of his life has been determined by powerful circumstances; and every one would say of himself, that if others knew all that he has felt, if others could enter into all his thoughts, and be made thoroughly acquainted both with his internal constitution and his external condition, they would not wonder that he is what he is, or that he has acted in the way he has. But we cannot thus account for or excuse the character and conduct of others; for we are strangers to their condition and circumstances; we are unacquainted with those impulses and tendencies which arise from their several peculiarities of bodily constitution; we know nothing of the impressions they have received from the example and sentiments of their daily associates, or of the strong prepossessions and habits which they have acquired from the mode of their education. Their misconduct consequently excites our astonishment. We cannot at all account for it, and in our ill-humour we are inclined to say that men are a race of wilful and obstinate sinners, inherently wicked and incorrigibly perverse; and so to imagine that nothing but miraculous means can save them from the effects of their miraculous guilt. Hence the natural means of improving the human character are neglected, and nothing is thought of but means of appeasing divine wrath, and escaping by spell, atonement, or sacrifice, from that fearful doom which is supposed to hang over this accursed race. But human guilt, if we regard it rightly, is not unaccountable or miraculous in its nature. There are natural causes for it, if we seek diligently to find them out; and there are natural remedies for it, if we have only patience to discover and apply them.

The guilt of every one is as natural, as excusable, as easily to be accounted for, if all his circumstances were known, as every individual feels his own guilt to be. We are all formed by the influence of education and circumstances acting in combination with those tendencies which we derive from our respective peculiarities of natural constitution or temperament. The latter we cannot command or alter; but all those more important causes of the formation of character, which consist in the mode of early training, in the habits to which children are accustomed from the first, in the knowledge imparted to them, and the examples set before them—all those causes also which consist in the institutions of government, and the customs, laws, and arrangements of society,—these are completely at our disposal, and may be so disposed as to *promote* the moral improvement of mankind as much as they have hitherto served to *retard* it. These natural means of operating upon and improving human character are entirely overlooked in that book which is regarded as the oracle of truth;* nor are they likely to be studied and applied as they ought to be, so long as pardon and salvation from divine wrath are regarded as the great need of man. If there be any lesson which God himself can be said to teach, it is this, that man is an improvable being, and that his improvement is to be effected, not by miraculous, but by natural means. These natural means are to be mainly sought for in the improved education and the improved condition of those classes which form the great bulk of the population in every country. But to develop them fully is a work of long investigation and long experience, and I can only hope in these discourses to remove the obstacles which obstruct our efforts, and to turn those efforts in a right direction. If, in this attempt, I shake one kind of faith, it is only that I may establish faith of a better kind; for whatever may become of priestly creeds and dogmas, there *is* a faith which is never to be relinquished: I mean, *faith in God as the author of an unspoiled world, and faith in man as a being who does not prefer evil for its own sake, but may be made to see, and led to choose, the good.*

* Where in the whole compass of the Bible do we find the subject of education noticed in a manner at all adequate to its immense importance? Where do we find any recognition of a truth which is now beginning to be generally felt and acknowledged, that the first step towards the improvement of the *character* of the working classes must be the improvement of their *condition?* The moral instructions of the New Testament are based upon the mistaken belief that the dissolution of the world was drawing nigh; and what is mainly there insisted on is, not the gradual improvement, by natural means, of the human character, but salvation in the great approaching day of the Lord.

THE SCHOOLMASTER'S

LECTURES ON THE BIBLE.

LECTURE I.

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

The Bible, we are told, is the word of God; for though written by human hands, it was dictated by the divine Spirit, and it is the authorised record of a long series of divine communications and miraculous interpositions with which God has favoured one chosen people for the ultimate benefit of the whole human race. We read, indeed, throughout the Bible, of men holding intercourse with God, and receiving immediately from that high source, instructions, laws, commands, and prophecies. We read, moreover, of men thus favoured, controlling the laws of nature by their word, and performing prodigies beyond all human power. But surely facts so remote from all ordinary experience are not to be received upon the mere testimony of an ancient book, the authors of which are doubtful or unknown. All ancient history is full of such statements, because all ancient history is founded on tradition, and tradition delights in the marvellous. Amidst the profound ignorance and gross superstition which prevailed in early times, the people, we know, were easily misled by the vain dreams of fanatics or the crafty devices of priests; and in reading, therefore, the history of early times, we have no hesitation in rejecting, by a general rule, all accounts of oracles, divine communications, and prodigies, as the tricks of priestcraft, or the fables of an age of barbarism. It is only in the history of the Jewish people that we are required to depart from this general rule; because, in this instance, it is alleged, we have accounts of supernatural facts supported by such testimony as cannot reasonably be resisted. Again and again it has been asserted, that of all the writings which have descended to us from ancient times there is none so surely authentic as those of the Bible, and

that we cannot therefore reject their testimony without denying credit to all other history. Often and confidently as this assertion has been made, I venture to say that it is utterly groundless *as applied to the historical books of the Bible*, and even from what the advocates of revelation have themselves stated or admitted, I undertake to shew that we are called upon to believe miracles, not merely on the testimony of writers in an ignorant and semi-barbarous age, but on the testimony of we know not whom. When we are told that a book is a compilation from documents more ancient than the time of the compiler, which documents are wholly lost; when the compiler himself is a person of obscure name, respecting whom there is nothing but doubt and conjecture,—what pretence has such a book to the title of authentic, or what claim to our belief beyond its own internal probability? The term *authentic*, if it means any thing, means that the record to which it is applied has a known author, whose character is responsible for the statements of that record. And I am prepared to shew, that in this sense it is totally inapplicable to by far the greater part of the historical books of the Bible. Let us begin with the Old Testament, and passing over for the present the five books of the Pentateuch, which I reserve for after-consideration, let us take first the book of Joshua. This book, says a strenuous advocate for the divine authority of the Bible, "is thus denominated, *because it contains a relation of the achievements of Joshua the son of Nun; but by whom it was written is a question concerning which learned men are by no means agreed.*"* He then proceeds to shew, from the internal evidence of the book itself, that it could not have been written by Joshua; and after detailing the various authors to whom it is ascribed by different commentators, he leaves the matter in doubt. He adds indeed the observation, that "whoever was the author of the book of Joshua, it is manifest that it was compiled from ancient, *authentic*, and contemporary documents." But he pretends not to tell us the author of these authentic documents.

The authorship of the book of Judges is involved in the same uncertainty. "There is considerable diversity of opinion," observes the writer already quoted, "as to the person by whom this book of Judges was written, it being by some writers ascribed to Phineas, Hezekiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, or Ezra, who compiled it from the memoirs of his own time which were left by each judge; while

* Horne's Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Scriptures, vol. iv. p. 30. ed. 1822.

others think that it was compiled by some prophet out of the public registers or records that were kept by the priests and Levites."*

Passing over the book of Ruth, which is of no importance in this inquiry, we proceed to the two books called the books of Samuel. "It is uncertain," says another commentator, "whether this and the following book are called the books of Samuel because he was the author of them, or only because his history constitutes a principal part of the sacred narrative."† But as the death of Samuel is related in the 25th chap. of the first book, it is impossible that he should have been the author of more than the twenty-four previous chapters. That portion is accordingly ascribed to him by some Jewish and Christian commentators, and the rest to the prophets Gad and Nathan. But it is not pretended that this is any thing more than a probable conjecture; and one critic is of opinion that the books of Samuel and the two books of Kings (which in the Septuagint and Vulgate are all called books of Kings, and numbered from one to four), were written by one and the same person, and published *about the forty-fourth year of the Babylonish captivity.*‡

Of the two books usually entitled the first and second books of Kings, Mr. Hewlett expressly acknowledges that "they cannot be positively assigned to any particular author, though some have ascribed them to Jeremiah, and some to Isaiah. There are many, likewise, who contend that they are the production of Ezra; and this opinion seems to be the most probable, for *they appear to be a collection or historical abridgement selected from the memoirs and books of the prophets, which are here frequently referred to, as records doubtless of contemporary writers.*"§ "It is evident," says Mr. Horne, "that two descriptions of writers were concerned in the composition of the books of Kings; first, those original, primitive, and contemporary authors who wrote the annals, journals, and memoirs of their own times, from which the authors of our sacred history subsequently derived their materials. *These ancient memoirs have not descended to us;* but they unquestionably were in the hands of those sacred penmen whose writings are in our possession, since they cite them and refer to them. The *second* class of writers consists of those by whom the books of Kings were actually composed in the form in which we now have them. The Jews ascribe

* Horne's Introduction, vol. iv. p. 37.

† Hewlett's Commentaries and Annotations on the Holy Scriptures, vol. ii. p. 33.

‡ Horne's Introduction, vol. iv p. 42.

§ Hewlett's Commentaries, vol. ii p. 113.

them to Jeremiah; and their opinion has been adopted by Grotius and other eminent commentators; others again assign them to the prophet Isaiah. But the most probable opinion is, that these books were digested into their present order by Ezra."*

Here, then, we have a distinct acknowledgment that the two books of Kings are compilations by unknown hands from documents the authors of which are equally unknown.

The two books of Chronicles are just in the same predicament. "The writer of these books," says Mr. Horne, "was neither a contemporary nor an original writer; but *compiled and abridged them from ancient memoirs, genealogies, annals, registers, and other works*, which he frequently quotes, and from which he sometimes gives copious extracts without changing the words or attempting to reconcile inconsistencies."† Yet, after these admissions, Mr. Horne does not scruple to say, that "the *authenticity* of these books is abundantly supported by the general mass of external evidence, by which also *their divine authority* is fully established." Strange solecism, to talk of the *authenticity* and *divine authority* of writings which he acknowledges to be mere compilations by unknown hands, from perished documents by authors equally unknown!

Respecting the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther, I will not trouble my reader with any observations, as it is of little importance to the present inquiry whether they are authentic or not. There is, indeed, no reason to doubt, that the two first of these were written, in part at least, by the persons whose names they bear, and who were themselves concerned in the transactions which they record, as appears by the use of the first person. To these books, therefore, the term *authentic* may with some propriety be applied. But observe, *they are books which contain nothing whatever of a miraculous nature*. We read no more of prophets conversing with God. We read no more of divine interference manifested in behalf of the favoured people. The second temple is built amidst the opposition of powerful enemies who long interrupt its progress. But no divine judgment overtakes the adversaries, like that which overtook the Philistines when they captured the sacred ark; and no miraculous cloud fills the holy fabric, like that which descended upon the tabernacle and filled the temple of Solomon. No reason can be assigned why the same Providence which interfered so remarkably in the earlier periods of the Jewish history, should not have interfered at this period. And it surely looks suspicious, that miracles and divine communications should be most rife in the questionable records of

* Horne's Introduction, vol. iv. p. 49. † Ibid. p. 55.

the earliest times, and altogether cease when we come to the period of authentic history.

The only historical books of the Old Testament that now remain for our consideration are the five books ascribed to Moses, and collectively called the Pentateuch. These, it is well known, originally formed but one book, and as the death of Moses, the reputed author, is related at the close, it is evident that *that* portion of the narrative at least could not have been written by him. Yet, observe, there is no intimation of a change of authorship, and no distinction is made between what is alleged to be the composition of Moses and what must have been the work of a later hand. When, moreover, it is considered that the book of Joshua is acknowledged to be so called, not because it was written by Joshua, but merely because it contains a relation of his achievements; and that, of the two books of Samuel, not one half can by any possibility be ascribed to him, and not one word is his according to the opinion of some commentators;—it is no unwarantable presumption that the Pentateuch is, in like manner, ascribed to Moses for no other reason than because it relates the achievements of Moses, or because it contains the laws established by him. This at least is admitted by Christian commentators, that the first part of the Pentateuch, the book of Genesis, is not the original work of Moses, but merely a compilation from various ancient documents, the authors of which are wholly unknown. This was the opinion of Calmet, Bishop Gleig, Astruc, Eichhorn, and various other critics of eminence and learning. The grounds of it I shall state in the words of a recent commentator, inferior to none in learning or ability. "It cannot fail," he observes, "to strike any one who reads the book of Genesis with care and attention, that the phrase, '*These are the generations,*' frequently occurs, not only at the head of genealogical tables, but in various other places.* Thus in chap. ii. 4, which is evidently the beginning of another account of the creation of the progenitors of the human race, this phrase appears in the form of a title: '*These are the generations of the heavens and the earth.*' One of the two accounts, which are mingled together to form the history of the deluge, is introduced in a similar manner: '*These are the generations of Noah*' (chap. vi. 9). The same formula occurs at the begin-

* On this phrase Dr. J. P. Smith remarks, that "the Hebrew word is that commonly used to introduce an historical relation, and learned translators render it in numerous places by *origin*, *history*, *account*, or some similar word." *On the Relation between the Holy Scriptures and some part of Geological Science.* By Dr. J. P. Smith, p. 203, 2d ed.

ning of the history of Isaac, after the death of Abraham (Gen. xxv. 19): '*These are the generations of Isaac the son of Abraham.*' And in chap. xxxvii. 2, we meet with the same expression at the head of what appears to be a distinct history of Jacob and his family, from the time that it became so intimately interwoven with the history of Joseph: '*These are the generations of Jacob.*' If the recurrence of this phrase be not admitted as a certain proof, it must be allowed to be not unfavourable to the conjecture, that the book of Genesis is, in a very great degree at least, composed of separate original memoirs."* To this I may add the opinion of the learned Dr. J. P. Smith, who, in his recent work "On the Relations between the Holy Scriptures and some parts of Geological Science," distinctly avows his conviction, that "the earlier part of the book of Genesis consists of several distinct compositions, marked by their differences of style and by express formularies of commencement;" and "that Moses *compiled* the chief part of the book of Genesis, by *arranging and connecting ancient memorials*, under divine direction." These last three words are evidently intended as a saving clause in favour of the inspired character of the book in question; but *who can believe in the inspiration and divine authority of a mere compilation?* Who can believe that a man enlightened and guided by the divine Spirit would condescend to be "a mere gatherer and disposer of other men's stuff," or that one who could have given us original information from the highest possible source, on a subject so deeply interesting as the creation and earliest history of the world, should have contented himself with patching up a collection of "ancient memorials," written by we know not whom? These ancient memorials, for any thing that appears, may have been mere oral traditions; and oral traditions, no matter by whom collected and committed to writing, are surely not sufficient evidence of miracles and divine communications.

But these observations, it may be said. do not apply to that larger and more important part of the Pentateuch which contains the history of Moses himself, and of transactions wherein he bore a leading part. This history has always been received by the Jewish people as the genuine production of their great lawgiver; and that circumstance, it is argued, affords a satisfactory warrant of the authenticity and credibility of the record. For the Mosaic law, it is said, imposed on the Jews a system of ceremonial observances so burdensome, that

* Wellbeloved's Dissertation on the Pentateuch, appended to the 4th part of his translation of the Bible, p. 6.

nothing less than the authority of a divinely-commissioned lawgiver could have brought them to submit to it. The Mosaic history also records a series of events of so public and signal a nature, that the falsehood of these statements, if they were false, must have been abundantly manifest to those to whom the book was offered. "There is no period," it is said, "in the Jewish history, in which it can be imagined, with any appearance of probability, that such writings as the four last books of the Pentateuch could be fabricated and imposed upon the nation as containing the true account of the origin of their race, and of the acts of their forefathers, and the very laws which God had prescribed. A whole people could not suffer themselves to be so deluded."* Now this argument, plausible as it seems, is built upon a supposition which no reasonable adversary would ever make. It is built upon the supposition, that the whole body of law and history in question is purely and altogether a forgery, which has no foundation whatever in truth. There is another way of accounting for the origin and reception of these writings, without admitting any thing miraculous, which this argument leaves untouched. What forbids our supposing that both the Jewish law and the Jewish history existed at first in oral tradition before they were committed to writing? In such a supposition there is nothing improbable or unprecedented. Every early nation, before the use of letters was introduced, had a traditionary history, correct in its great leading facts, but disfigured, as tradition usually is, with more or less of fabulous story. Every early nation, too, before the use of letters was introduced, had some rude system of traditionary law, which consisted in established customs and observances that regulated the administration of justice or the ceremonies of religion. Such were the laws of Lycurgus, which Plutarch expressly tells us were not committed to writing. Such were the laws of our Saxon ancestors, who, says Dr. Henry, "at their arrival in Britain had no written laws, but were governed, as their ancestors had been for many ages, by certain well-known and established customs which had the force of laws. This was the case with all the northern nations who invaded and subdued the several provinces of the Roman empire; they had no written laws when they left their native seats, but were governed by customs exactly similar to those of the Anglo-Saxons. All these nations, after they had formed establishments in Gaul, Spain, Italy, and Britain, became acquainted with letters, and put their ancient customs into writing, which were their first written laws. This is the true reason of the great similarity of the ancient

* Wellbeloved's Dissertation on the Pentateuch.

laws of the Franks, Burgundians, Lombards, Wisigoths, and Anglo-Saxons. All these laws were transcripts of the same original customs by which the ancestors of all these nations had been governed in the wilds of Germany and Scandinavia."*

It is admitted by commentators that the laws of the Israelitish people did not all originate with Moses. There was a more ancient traditionary or consuetudinary law, which the laws ascribed to Moses obviously presuppose. Such was the custom of the *goel* or blood-avenger, referred to in Numbers xxxv. 12. This blood-avenger was the nearest relation of the person murdered, whose right and duty it was to avenge his kinsman's death with his own hand. In several passages of the Mosaic law, this avenger of blood is spoken of as a character perfectly known, and "when we find," observes Michaelis, "the very same law, though unwritten, among nations closely related to the Israelites, though they never received the Mosaic law; when, as for example, we recognise in all its horror the *goel* of the Hebrews in the *tair* of the Arabs, whose revenge, however, must in certain sacred places be put to rest, we can be at no loss to perceive, in this usage of theirs, the source from which the Mosaic precept sprung." Such also was the custom of divination by the Urim and Thummim, which is mentioned in such a manner in Exodus xxviii. as plainly shews that it was a custom already well known to those for whom the writing was intended, though modern commentators are lost in conjectures about it. Besides these, the custom of the Levirate, that is, of brothers marrying the widows of deceased brothers, the custom of septenary servitude, of suretyship, of giving pledges, the privilege of primogeniture, and several religious observances, appear to have been known and acknowledged prior to the writing of the law. Now if we only suppose that Moses was the first who began to systematise and improve this body of consuetudinary or traditionary law, even though he may have committed to writing no more than the Decalogue, this alone, if we consider the circumstances in which the documents of the law were preserved, will be sufficient to account for the reception as his of many subsequent additions. That what he wrote himself was very brief is intimated by the history itself; for in Joshua viii. 30-32, we are informed that when the Israelites were partly established in the land of Canaan, Joshua, their leader, built an altar to Jehovah, God of Israel, in Mount Ebal, and wrote upon it a copy of the law of Moses, and that he afterwards read all the words of the law, the blessings and the cursings, according to all that is written in the book of the law. This surely implies that the

* Henry's History of Great Britain, vol. iii. p. 389.

Mosaic law, at the period when this history was written, must have been very brief; for it is absurd to suppose that the whole law, as we now find it in the Pentateuch, could either have been written in the small compass of an altar, or read on a single occasion to the assembled people. Commentators seem sensible of this difficulty, and endeavour to remove it by supposing that the law engraven on the plastered stones was no more than the Decalogue, or the denunciations contained in Deut. xxvii. But this is a purely gratuitous supposition; for the narrative plainly says, without any restriction, "that he wrote there upon the stones a copy of the law of Moses." And, at any rate, what he *read* on this occasion was the whole of the Mosaic law at that time known; for we are expressly told in verse 35, that "*there was not a word of all that Moses commanded which Joshua read not before all the congregation of Israel.*"

It is abundantly evident, moreover, from several hints in the narrative, that during a long period of time no copy of the law existed but what was in the possession of the priests. This appears from Deuteronomy xvii. 18, where, amidst the directions alleged to have been given for the conduct of the future king, it is required, that, "when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, he shall write him a copy of this law in a book *out of that which is before the priests, the Levites.*" Nay, even this copy, which was before the priests, seems to have been very negligently kept, and to have been little known to the kings themselves; for in the reign of Josiah, we are informed, it was found by Hilkiah the high-priest in the house of the Lord, and that when it was read to Josiah, it excited the liveliest alarm in his mind on account of the entire disregard into which it had fallen (2 Kings xxii. 8-14). The book of the law being thus unknown to the laity, and constantly in possession of the priests, who probably were the only persons acquainted with letters, it was easily in their power to add whatever they pleased to the original record. And though there is a direction in Deuteronomy xxxi. 10-13, that this law should be read to the assembled people *once in seven years*, at the feast of tabernacles, this practice, if it were observed, (which from the transaction just referred to there is reason to doubt), would evidently be quite ineffectual to prevent the priests from modifying the law at their own pleasure; for what individual of the laity, who heard the law only once in seven years, could possibly be so well acquainted with its contents as to detect alterations and additions? Supposing, then, that Moses left only a scanty nucleus of written law, is there any thing very improbable in the supposition that the priests, who were the sole scribes, the sole writers and conservators of all the legal

and historical records, would add to this document from time to time a variety of matter, which might tend to strengthen their own influence, and increase the veneration of the people for the institutions which they were anxious to uphold? Among a people ignorant and half-civilised, as the Jews of that period evidently were, and proud of their triumphs over the nations they had subdued, tradition would naturally be at work, with its usual tendencies to exaggeration and love of the marvellous. Regarding the God whom they worshipped under the name of Jehovah as their own peculiar divinity, who fought on their side, and looked upon their enemies as his enemies, (for such is the light in which he is plainly represented in the Pentateuch), they would be prone to consider every signal deliverance and victory which tradition recorded as an interposition of their patron Deity in their favour. And in the course of transmission from father to son, each story would acquire, as is usual in traditionary history, some new feature of the marvellous, till the truth became hidden in a heap of fiction. These gatherings of tradition the priests would not be likely to oppose. On the contrary, as they might easily be made subservient to their views of securing and increasing the veneration of the people for their national institutions, they would be glad to adopt and embody them in the record of which they were the depositaries; while the people, when they heard these miraculous stories read in conjunction with the law, would not be disposed to sift very curiously the evidence of what they had already received with eagerness on the mere testimony of oral tradition. In an age when oracles were in vogue, and divine communications to priests and prophets were considered as events of common occurrence, the belief would easily arise that their great legislator was peculiarly honoured in this way, and that the laws which he delivered were dictated by Jehovah himself. This belief the priests would of course encourage; and whatever embellishments they might think proper to add to the story, such as we now find in the narrative of God's descent on Mount Sinai, and the interviews of Moses with him there, would be readily listened to by a credulous people. As new observances arose, or new occasions presented themselves for more strictly enforcing or more accurately defining old observances, new passages would accordingly be from time to time added to the record; and in order to secure for these additional enactments the same respect which the old ones received, it would be necessary to represent them as further communications of God to Moses; and hence that miscellaneous collection of ritual precepts, without order or method, which we find in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers; each prefaced by the often-recur-

ring phrase, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying." Thus may the Pentateuch have grown up and acquired authority with the Jewish people as the work of Moses, though Moses may have written only a very inconsiderable portion of it. I have supposed it to be a mixed compilation of traditionary law and traditionary history, which originated probably in some written document left by Moses, but which was for the most part written at sundry periods by the priests, who having the documents of the law exclusively in their keeping, could easily add to it whatever suited their present purpose, or whatever the practices which arose in the course of time might suggest. This hypothesis evades the force of all those arguments which rest upon the alleged impossibility of imposing upon the Jewish nation a forgery of such high pretensions, and requiring so much that they would not be likely to submit to, except upon the best authority. Upon this hypothesis, it was not a pure forgery without any foundation; for we suppose that Moses began the work, and we suppose that the substance of what was added was the gradual accumulation of new observances and new traditions, which had already acquired some degree of authority before they were committed to writing. But this hypothesis must of course be tested by a detailed examination of the work itself; and if from such an examination it appears that the history is a lame and careless narrative, full of blunders and inconsistencies; and the law an incongruous piece of patchwork, unworthy even of a wise human legislator, the traditionary character and human origin of the work will need no other confirmation. To exhibit these indications will be the object of several succeeding lectures, and I shall select them from that part of the Pentateuch which is considered to be the best authenticated. In the Mosaic account of the creation and the deluge, and in other passages of the book of Genesis, there are difficulties which all allow, and none are able to explain satisfactorily. But as these belong to that part of the Pentateuch which is admitted to be a compilation, I shall pass them over, and begin my examination with those transactions which Moses, the reputed author, is supposed to relate from his own experience.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY ROBSON, LEVEY, AND FRANKLYN,
23 Great New Street, Fetter Lane.

THE EDUCATION QUESTION.

SPECIAL RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION.

BY

A CLERGYMAN OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

REPRINTED FROM THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN REVIEW.

EDINBURGH:
ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK,
LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, & LONGMANS, LONDON.
MDCCCXLI.

Price Sixpence.

TO

THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED EMPIRE.

I HUMBLY venture to entreat men of all ranks and religious persuasions to give this little work an attentive and dispassionate consideration. The subject is one in which all are alike interested, and concerning which, error appears alike to prevail among all. Any person who casts a scrutinizing eye over society must see how very few, comparatively speaking, are influenced in the uniform tenor of their character by the principles of the religion they profess; how strangely disproportionate are its visible fruits, as described in Scripture, to the pains taken from the earliest period to inculcate its belief. Were the neglect and transgression of its plainest injunctions confined to those who disclaim its authority, there would be neither matter of surprise nor occasion for inquiry. The cause and the effect would mutually elucidate each other. But when multitudes of people, who have been carefully instructed in the doctrines of Christianity, are yet sparingly observant of its duties—when its sacred precepts of meekness, mercy, justice, and charity, are solemnly acknowledged, but seldom obeyed—when there is little else than strife and rancour where there should be universal harmony and peace—when there is an abounding display of spiritual fervour and pretension, and a deplorable lack of moral rectitude and worth—when many things indifferent are reprobated as sinful, while many things sinful are regarded as indifferent—such a condition of a Christian society is so repugnant to every just notion of what it ought to be, that the reflecting mind naturally sets to work to ascertain, if possible, how it may be accounted for, and by what means it may be improved.

Numerous causes, without a doubt, conspire to produce the effects I have described. But a primary and originating cause appears to me to lie in the established system of administering religious instruction to the young. Imperfect in all our knowledge and wisdom, we frequently employ incompatible means for the attainment of the worthiest ends; we frustrate our best intentions by the weakness of our plans for their execution. This truth seems to be nowhere more strongly exemplified than in our mode of treating the minds of children with reference to religion. Our manner of setting about the task is singularly at variance with its supreme importance. The character of man through life mainly depends on, and is influenced by, the nature of his education. I speak of education, not in its ordinary sense, and as implying the mere acquirement of erudition, but in its highest sense, and as comprehending the training of the faculties for the moral and spiritual purposes of his being.

Now, this training is an undertaking that requires vast carefulness, attention, vigilance, and discretion. It is therefore neglected to an incredible extent; and a substitute is found for it in the direction of the youthful faculties to the learning of the mysterious truths of Scripture. The thing is done with little cost of trouble or anxiety; and the very sanctity of the act saves it from all doubtfulness concerning its utility. Hence the blind and unreflecting confidence with which it is clung to, notwithstanding the daily accumulating proofs of its inefficacy for the formation of *upright, conscientious, charitable, practical,* Christians; and, unfortunately, but little is attempted at the present day throughout the subsequent stages of existence, to correct this erroneous commencement of the work of instruction. While every thing is needed that can tend to the improvement of the hearts and lives of men, their minds are kept in a continual ferment by controversies which have no actual bearing or possible influence on that most important object, and which, so far from contributing to spiritual unity or moral usefulness, are detrimental to both, by fixing attention wholly on differences of doctrine and discipline, to the exclusion of charity, and consequently diverting it from the "diligence" required of all, in order "to make their calling and election sure" by righteousness.

To expose the dangerous effects of the system, the following pages have been published. A universal outcry has at length been raised for the education of the people. But, as the very error I allude to forms the basis of the plan on which it is thought indispensable to conduct this education, I conceived it might essentially serve the interests of true religion and humanity, to lay before the world undeniable proofs of its pernicious tendency. For the better attainment of my object, by giving the work extended circulation, it is now reprinted in a cheap and commodious form. It is written for no party purpose, ecclesiastical or political. It is tainted by no polemical or sectarian feeling. It is levelled at no particular class of society or denomination of Christians; but, as regards the errors it exposes, as well as the improvements it suggests, was intended for the use and benefit of all. That it will meet with an unfavourable reception in many quarters I am sufficiently convinced. It will necessarily have to encounter the densest mists of prejudice with which the mind is clouded on the subject, and I am not presumptuous enough to suppose it possessed of power capable of overcoming these. But it will pave the way, I fondly hope and believe, for abler pens to work on them with surer effect, and to their final dispersion. Many excellent and eminent men have the same great cause at heart, and are labouring to promote such an enlightened and comprehensive system of national education, as may serve to purify the morals of society, while it knits together the religious parties of the empire in the bonds of Christian fellowship and peace. To have contributed my humble aid to so glorious an object will be a happy reflection for me to the latest hour of my life. I would to God all my brethren in the Christian Church might be brought to feel the propriety of uniting for the same purpose.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION, &c.

It seems to be at length a settled point among men of all parties and persuasions, that the people of the United Empire shall be educated; but the universal agreement as to the desired end does not bring us much nearer to its accomplishment. We have advanced, indeed, one step farther in unanimity on the subject. It is acknowledged, without a dissentient voice, that the people ought to be *religiously* educated.—Here, however, all harmony ceases, and a strife has commenced which threatens to impede every measure of a national kind for their instruction.

The cause of this strife is sufficiently notorious. It is insisted that Scriptural doctrines shall form part of the teaching to be given to the poor at the public schools. An outcry is forthwith raised, and a struggle ensues among the religious bodies of the kingdom, as to the degree of influence they are severally to possess over this branch of education. The Church of England demands the entire possession of it for herself. The Dissenters claim their proportionate share. The Catholics aspire to a similar participation. The Church maintains her ground against both the others, but is joined by the Dissenters in resistance to the Catholics. Here, then, has a religious feud broken out on the very threshold of the undertaking! The object of the undertaking itself is banished from the view by the acrimony excited among the parties. The rights of justice are scoffed at in the desire for ecclesiastical supremacy. The claims of the poor are set at nought amidst the fury of sectarian intolerance. Like all other things in this land of liberty, religion is made the theme of party vehemence, resentment, and recrimination, and her own divine charity is trampled under foot in the affected eagerness to promote her interests.

I mean not at present to enter into the special merits of this controversy; my intention is at once to challenge the principle whence it originates, by denying the propriety of introducing Scriptural doctrine as a subject of instruction into schools. I believe the practice to be attended with imminent danger to the spiritual welfare of the young; and, if it can be shewn that such is the case, it may assist in removing the obstacle to a uniform plan of national education. I know the opposition that is to be encountered. I know the misapprehension, the misconstruction, the misrepresentation to which all are exposed, who dispute the soundness of a principle or practice, identified in the minds of men with even the *apparent* interests of religion. But I am not deterred. It is in behalf of its *real* interests that I appeal to the judgment of the public; these have not always been advanced by means that were long

received as most fitted for the purpose. The light in which I consider the subject will be at once explained by the three following propositions, which I shall endeavour, to the best of my ability, to establish :—

First, that the practice usually pursued, and declared to be indispensable in a system of education, namely, of teaching the doctrines of Scripture during childhood and in school, and after the manner in which ordinary instruction is given, so far from being favourable to the formation of a Christian character, has a powerful tendency to impair the true influence of religion, to render the belief in it formal and inoperative, and even to endanger its hold on many minds.

Secondly, that there are in society abounding evidences of this tendency, in the kind of influence which religion exercises over men professedly zealous, and the extent to which a spirit of sectarianism is substituted for the spirit of the Gospel, sufficient to warn us against the application of the practice to the instruction of the poor.

And, *lastly*, that *Scriptural instruction* does not in itself imply what is properly understood by a *religious education ;* that such education, up to a certain period, may be most judiciously conducted without it, and should in all ordinary cases be left to the parents of youth, aided in due time by the Christian minister, whose office it is, and not that of the schoolmaster, to teach the doctrines of religion.

For the clearer understanding of all I have to advance on the subject, it may be well to state at the outset what I conceive to be the character of our religion as regards its comprehensive design for the moral purification of mankind, through the regenerating power of grace. I know no words better adapted to my purpose than the following simple and succinct account of it by Locke :—

" The Christian religion we profess is not a notional science to furnish speculation to the brain, nor discourse to the tongue, but a rule of righteousness to influence our lives."

I can scarcely anticipate an exception to this brief description of the purpose which Christianity was intended to serve with the great body of believers. Now, then, as to the first proposition.

It might seem obvious, even on a cursory view of the matter, that, in order to make youth religious, some other mode is of necessity required than that which we employ in making them acquainted with any branch of science, or letters, or art. In the latter case we have to deal with the mental faculties, and with them only. The memory and understanding are the channels through which all knowledge of the kind is conveyed and obtained, and through which it is gradually sifted and refined to the highest state of perfection. *The work of instruction begins and ends with them.* But in the former case we have to call other agents into play, on whose influence we must mainly rely for the success of our undertaking. There we can do little or nothing, unless we interest the heart, and engage its affections in the task. *They* are the great instruments to which we must have recourse in childhood, for the purpose of making man " wise unto salvation ;" for it is through them the influences of God themselves work for the production of a lively and active belief. The profoundest knowledge of sacred things may be acquired,

with little or no effect on the disposition or the life. The critical interpreter of Scripture is often void of the Christian spirit, while it burns with a lambent flame in the breast of the unlearned reader;* yet we trust to the mental faculties with similar confidence for accomplishing the intended object in both cases. I believe this to be a fatal mistake in the education of children, and the grounds of my belief I shall shortly explain.

So far as ordinary acquirements are concerned, a child must profit, to a certain extent at least, by instruction at school. Though he should even go there "grudgingly, or of necessity," the tasks he is compelled to learn convey useful information to the mind. The memory of the young is tenacious, and easily retains what is read. The progress of the individual may be slow, and his labour may be painful; but knowledge is, notwithstanding, imbibed, and this (speaking merely of the *nature* of the thing) is all that is required. The end is therefore gained. But as regards religious acquirement, where is the gain, or in what does it consist? Daily lessons from Scripture may be got by rote, the memory may be stored with the language of inspiration, the mind may be conversant with the words of doctrine, and what then? If nothing were needed but to furnish the understanding with ideas for its future employment on the subject, well and good; but if it be necessary for our purpose to move the affections, what is all this but at best a useless expenditure of our pains? Can the cold and mechanical process of learning and formally repeating what is lifelessly taught, make the smallest impression on the heart? Can such a species of discipline have the effect of guiding the youthful mind to good? Will it lay the foundation for the superstructure of a Christian disposition or a Christian life? I am apt to think that in too many instances it will produce a contrary result. That which I describe as being at *best* the useless expenditure of our pains, will, I fear, at the *worst*, prove positively mischievous.

There are certain tendencies in human nature which ought ever to be carefully regarded and conformed to, for the purpose of directing it (as far as our human efforts are concerned in doing so) to good. Among these, is its invariable aptness to be swayed by the influence of impressions and habits. It is by means of the former that we are chiefly enabled, and should consequently endeavour, to mould the tender mind of youth; for it is only when received at an early period that they possess a powerful and enduring force. The latter obtain their force at a more advanced season of life. Now, with reference to the religious welfare of children, every thing depends on the nature of the impressions that we make, and on the manner in which their habits are formed. The one should be uniformly of a pleasing and encouraging cast; the other should be allowed to grow out of the free motions of the will. It is a remarkable fact, however, that we set out with violently opposing both these unalterable tendencies. We positively seem to consider an acknowledgment of their necessary influence as implying a doubtfulness of divine grace; we act as though we were taught on Scriptural authority, that there was no other method of rendering human nature amenable to religious purposes, than by

* Experience thus satisfactorily proves the existence of some medium distinct from that of intelligence, through which religious truth must penetrate, so that it may effect its benign purposes on the moral nature of man.

contradicting and thwarting its own inherent principles—principles that, according to our wise or injudicious treatment of them, may be turned to the best or to the worst account. In childhood, for instance, we impose habits: these, from the very circumstance of their being so imposed, produce painful impressions, and thus, from their association in the memory, counteract their intended effect. In manhood we labour to make impressions, when the mind has lost its ductility, and is incapable of shaking off the evil ones existing there, to leave room for what are good.

By taxing the mental faculties at an *unripe* age in the service of religion, the heart is commonly repelled, and often irretrievably estranged from her cause. *They* are evidently not the agents through which God has ordained us to work on the young, to attach them to that cause. The feelings, being slighted when they should be assiduously wooed, involuntarily resent the neglect by subsequent indifference. The attention required of children in learning lessons is naturally accompanied, in most cases, with irksome sensations; it puts their volatile minds under a restraint which is obnoxious and painful to them. The effect is very often detrimental to a desire for general knowledge; but by making Scripture the theme of such lessons we create impressions unfavourable to the subject, which of all others ought to be associated with those of the most pleasing and inviting kind: we thus hinder the growth of *religious sentiment* in the breast, or, to speak more correctly, we prevent it from obtaining access there. Nothing is so dangerous as to tamper with such a sentiment; it is one that stubbornly resists every attempt at coercion: to infuse it by gentle methods is easy,—to propel it, impossible.

But this is only a small portion of the evil. A still more injurious impression is made on the young mind by bringing the most awful subjects down to the level of the most ordinary ones, which it is required and accustomed to commit to memory *in common with them!*

The doctrines of Scripture, as all are aware, can have no influence on the mind till it has arrived at a capacity to discern their sacred import; it must, at least, attain the power of comprehending their sanctity ere it can be brought to a rational confession of their truth. To reserve for a capable age, then, the communication of matters demanding such comprehension, would seem to be the suggestion of common sense. But no! Scarcely has the infant been taught to read, before catechisms, confessions of faith, or such like, embodying the sublimest mysteries of religion, are presented to it in the shape of *tasks*, to be learned along with all the ordinary rudiments of school instruction. The same pains are taken to exercise the memory on the sacred and the secular lesson, as if the words engraven there by both were meant to serve the like purpose, and no more reverence were exacted for the one than for the other. In both is the mind regularly drilled after the same fashion; and in both is the attention of the instructor fixed on the same objects, namely, the accuracy with which the lesson is repeated, and the acuteness which the memory displays!

Now what must be the effect of all this? The intention is to train up the mind in the belief of sacred doctrine, by making it habitually conversant with the subject from the earliest age; but is it surprising, that, under such a process, its belief (if belief there be) should be of that cold, sterile, unproductive

character, unfortunately so common among men? Is it reasonable to expect the mind to feel or acquire a due degree of awe and reverence for what has been thus jumbled in the thoughts and recollection with the most discordant topics from the days of childhood? Must not its association with all that was profane, and irreverent, and wearisome, and frivolous, and vexatious, in the scene and occupations of the school-room, hang like "a blast and mildew" on the memory, and chill the influence of the sacred lessons in the soul? Recollect the strong susceptibility of the young mind to all sorts of impressions, and its durable retention especially of the worst, and then consider the damage which religion must sustain from this systematic desecration of its images and language, ere their holiness can be felt or understood. Yet this is what many conceive to be a *religious education!* and it is to this premature and parrot-like intimacy with the mysteries of revelation that they look with the happiest complacency for the blessings which Christianity confers. It is to this knowledge, which barely inoculates the head, without at all impregnating the heart, that they confide for the moral safety of beings who are speedily to be launched forth on the troubled and perilous waters of life. Is it wonderful if we see so many pursuing their course thereafter,—some with a blind indifference to the *essentials*,—others with a superstitious trust in the *externals* of religion, to the exclusion of all its sanctified graces and substantial fruits in both?

A system so universally extolled and practised as the initiation of the young mind in the doctrines of revelation, must needs be defended. It is accordingly said to be necessary to overcome its natural repugnance to religious truth. So inherently is this feeling supposed to be implanted there, that, unless pains are taken to subdue it in its infancy, subsequent efforts for the purpose are viewed as hopeless,—hopeless, with reference, of course, to our human means. It does seem perfectly amazing that no one has considered whether much of this repugnance, as it manifests itself in after-life, and for which all our toiling and tasking of the infant mind are provided as a remedy, may not have been generated by that remedy itself? whether we do not, in fact, strike at the very root of true religious influence by anticipating the operations of a mature and reflecting age? Piety has so riveted our confidence in the system, that it appears a species of profanity to question its wisdom. Well! I ask no more than this:—let any one reflect on the distaste with which thousands receive all kinds of instruction in their tender years, —the disgust with which they look back ever after to the discipline they underwent in the nursery and at school,—the delight with which they hail the period when they can cast off all thoughts and associations connected with them,—and see whether he is not able to form some notion of the danger which religion incurs of being banished from the mind as part and parcel of these. Is it not quite possible,—nay, is it not quite probable, that the slender hold it retains over numbers may be owing to the discouraging influences and impressions described? Is it not, in the first place, sufficiently plain, that the effect of the sublimest truths must be lost for a time by communicating them when the mind is wholly unprepared to comprehend their awfulness and importance? Is it not, in the next place, perfectly intelligible, that the technical and irreverent familiarity with which it is permitted to handle

these truths during that time, may prove ever after an insuperable obstacle to the admission of such ideas or feelings in connexion with them? These are questions deserving of the gravest consideration. For my own part, I cannot entertain a doubt that there is something intrinsically wrong in our treatment of the young concerning religion. Instead of duly and patiently preparing the soil, like skilful husbandmen, for the reception of the seed of life by moral culture, we fling it instantaneously and indiscriminately on every soil, neglecting the lesson which our Lord has so beautifully drawn for us from the analogies of nature, to warn us of what may be its fate. The consequence is, we find in innumerable instances that it has fallen among stones and thorns, but marvellously seldom on that "good ground" where it "brings forth fruit to perfection."

But there is another evil of our system, which, though more occult, unveils itself in a fearful form to my apprehension. I allude to the effect likely to be produced by what we plainly intimate to the young, namely, that no trust is to be reposed in their desire for religious information, when the faculties have gained a competent degree of strength;—that it is solely on their *weakness* we rely for impressing them with the belief in Scriptural truth;—that there is nothing, moreover, in the glorious works of God worthy of notice, or through the contemplation of which they may be enticed to the study of him in his Word; and that the latter is a thing which, in common with all scholastic information, must be crammed into the mind by pure dint of intellectual effort, and dogmatically enforced on its attention, under similar juvenile penalties and pains.

Now what inference is likely to be drawn from such implied representations of revealed religion by those whom we have endeavoured, at an unseasonable age, to inspire with its belief, so soon as they escape from our trammels, and come to think for themselves? May it not too often be, that we have no confidence in its divine power to accomplish such a purpose, *when once the understanding is matured?*—that unless it be engrafted in the mind in infancy through the force of prejudice, or habit, or association, we consider it *incapable of awakening devout conviction at a riper age?* And let us not imagine, because we cannot trace to its source this effect of exhibiting a seeming distrust of the potency of God's Word, that the effect may not be very commonly produced, to the extensive diffusion of scepticism or unbelief;—let us not imagine, that though we think we attach many by our system to the cause of religion, it may not be the means of scaring as many from that cause;—let us not imagine, while it is plain we so often fail in our endeavours, that the failure may not be as much owing to our mismanagement of nature as to the perverseness of nature herself. The mind is a *mystery*. Whenever we desire to gain its confidence, nothing is so prejudicial to our purpose as to betray the slightest semblance of a want of confidence ourselves. And what can more resemble such a want, than this eagerness to lay the whole of the sublimest truths of God before the undeveloped faculties of an incapable child; than this haste to pre-occupy it with a subject, as if we believed the subject inadequate to satisfy its conviction by any exercise of reason or process of thought? And on what authority, derived from either precept or example, do we found our practice? Where do we discover a precedent or parallel for it, either in the order of nature or in the dispensation

of grace? The former plainly teaches us a different lesson, and we strictly obey it in conveying all other kinds of instruction to the young. We commence the work with the simplest elements of knowledge, and proceed with the higher branches as the faculties expand. The course of God's proceedings also in the revelation of his truth, warns us to adopt a similar plan for its disclosure to the youthful race. It was not given at once, and in the most sublime form, to mankind *during the infancy of the world*. The last dispensation was reserved for a more advanced period, when, in the language of Scripture, "the fulness of time was come." Nor is this all. The great Apostle of the Gentiles recognised and acted on the same principle as applicable to the *individual* mind, in communicating the mysterious things of God, even to his adult disciples. "Strong meat," says St Paul, "belongeth to them that are of full age; even those who, *by reason of use*, have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." Yet we discard this sacred authority, and run counter to our usual practice. We feed the infant mind with the strongest Scriptural food, instead of gradually training it to the reception of such sustenance, by aliments of a more suitable, and consequently a more salutary kind. Nature, as might be expected, rebels against the disproportionate nourishment, and a repugnance is created, which exercises its unhappy influence over many a character through life.

I proceed to the consideration of my second proposition, and shall endeavour to shew the effects of our system in the spurious nature of that religion which chiefly engages the attention, and obtains the suffrages, of society.

From the character of the zeal daily displayed in its cause, I am compelled to conclude that the religion of multitudes of educated people is a religion of mere belief and opinion, disjoined from its effective and indispensable ally, sentiment and feeling. It is a religion of prejudice or passion, of party or politics, rather than of principle and practice. It is a religion of faith, without its best fruits; of zeal, without its highest knowledge. Its spirit is not only different from, but directly opposed to, the spirit of Christianity. Instead of being enlarged and comprehensive, as the Gospel indisputably is in its promises of mercy to mankind, it is narrow and exclusive; instead of being "gentle and easy to be entreated," it is fierce and vindictive; instead of being "meek and lowly," it is presumptuous and proud. It is lavish in its shew of the "form of godliness," but falls far short in its proofs of the "power thereof." It testifies itself too often by the "outward sign," without any more authentic evidence of the "inward grace." It possesses not one of the attributes of that charity which "envieth not," and "vaunteth not itself," and "is not puffed up," and "doth not behave itself unseemly." *All these things it does, and persists in doing, most contumaciously and outrageously!* In brief, the Christian religion, as professed by vast numbers of the community, is exactly the reverse of what I have described it in the words of Locke. With them, it *is* "a notional science to furnish speculation to the brain and discourse to the tongue." It consequently fails in a great measure as "a rule of righteousness to influence the life."

Much of this, I am apt to think, may be explained by our eager instruction of the young in the doctrines of revelation. The practice is chiefly owing to

the anxiety of the various churches and sects to prepossess the minds of their infant members with an ardent and (under just regulation) a proper devotion to their own peculiar institutions. A security is supposed to be thus gained for their stedfast attachment to the faith in which they have been so early initiated. But in over-anxiety and premature efforts for this laudable purpose, the great end and aim of the divine, original, all-embracing institution of Christianity itself, are sadly forgotten. The consideration is, not whether youth shall turn out to be conscientious believers and exemplary members of a Christian society, but whether they shall become stanch, determined, and unscrupulous supporters of this or that church or sect. I am far from alleging that the latter is the *sole* object; but I am sure that it has very commonly much more influence than the former in the religious instruction of the young. The effect of it is, to encourage in their minds feelings and sentiments that ought to be studiously repressed. In order, for instance, to enhance their regard for the belief which they are taught, severe reflections are cast upon the creed of others. An impression is made on them, that not only is theirs the truest form of Christianity, but that all else are undeserving, or scarcely deserving, of the name. Nothing is so easy as to instil such a persuasion, even without an express assertion of the kind. Notions of vanity, bigotry, and intolerance, are thus imbibed at the earliest period, and all the springs of pure and generous feeling are poisoned by their influence. They give birth to mean, malignant, interested, selfish propensities. A spirit of exclusiveness and uncharitableness once engendered, will not confine itself to the concerns of religion. It taints the whole moral nature, and betrays its power over the character, amidst all the varied relations and multiplied interests of society. It prohibits the admission into the breast of that divine principle which teaches us to *love every human being as ourselves*, and consequently excludes the sense of justice, equity, and fair-dealing towards mankind, whether on the broad scale of our social connexions, or in the narrower sphere of individual life.* The virtues of meekness and benevolence, in their highest and most comprehensive form, are essential to constitute a *good Christian*, in whatever creed he may be brought up; but the system is adverse to their cultivation; and they are rarely induced to grow where the opposite vices have taken root and flourish.

This system, then, is in many cases of little more use than to fill the memory with sacred learning, make the mind critical in matters of doctrine, and the tongue expert in discussing questions concerning discipline and faith. The religion of numbers thus becomes an *intellectual*, and not a *spiritual*, endowment. It is the foundation whereon a strong excitement may be raised against adverse creeds. It is a powerful engine for the formation of a religious or political partisan, but is miserably defective as the means of fitting a

* Take an example,—The coffers of the State are filled by the contributions of Churchmen, Catholics, and Dissenters. The rule of *taxation* is so far just and impartial: but observe the rule of *distribution* on which the state is expected to act. A grant of public money has been voted for national education, and Churchmen protest, in the name of sacred truth, against appropriating any share of it to the instruction of the Catholics! They might, with equal right, protest against affording them protection for their lives and properties, they having contributed to the fund expended on *both* these purposes, in common with the rest of society. Thus is the sense of ordinary justice quenched by the sectarian spirit!

being for eternity. It renders the individual a bold and unsparing censor of errors of belief in others, while he continues a patient and indulgent observer of moral delinquencies in himself.* It does not chasten the temper, or purify the affections, or imbue the heart with the graces and virtues of the Gospel; but it fills the mind with a morbid anxiety for things novel in the shape of doctrine, and all kinds of information on disputed points of faith. It begets a mania for hearing the Scriptures *expounded*, which it makes the sole object of multitudes assembled in the house of *prayer;* rivets the attention on pulpit discourses as matters for critical examination, and not as persuasives to goodness of life; and converts the sacred temple raised for the worship of God into a place for rendering homage to the learning and eloquence of man.† Under its guidance, instead of traversing the broad domains of Christianity in quest of every thing "pure and lovely, and of good report," and claiming kindred with all who are pushing for the one goal, though by different paths, men refuse to see anything good except in the course they are themselves treading, and recoil with aversion from all who are disinclined to follow in the same track.

Now, it is not too much to say, that, however orthodox the creed of such men may be, it cannot be a genuine love of truth that animates their zeal; they, doubtless, believe it to be so, but they most assuredly deceive themselves. *That* love strictly guards its votaries from being seduced by error, but never prompts them to think or judge severely of those who are not morally responsible for the errors they maintain. The real lover of divine truth is uniformly actuated by the principle of charity; and for the simple reason, that charity is a vital, essential, and indispensable element of that truth; insomuch, that without it the highest spiritual endowments have been pronounced as vain and worthless for time or for eternity! Where there is not charity, in the fulness of its evangelical meaning, it may be confidently affirmed there is neither true religion nor enlightened zeal. Such is the case with the class of persons I describe: their sympathies are tied up within the bounds of the church, or sect, or spiritual party to which they belong; they can see no signs of grace or godliness beyond them. To be of *Paul*, or of *Apollos*, or of *Cephas*, is a matter of infinitely greater moment with them, than to be of *Christ*. Do we need proofs of this? Look at the state of society:

* These delinquencies, in the ordinary judgment of the public, range within a singularly limited compass, and the mischievous effect on the individual mind and conduct is consequently great. Many people are regarded, and esteem themselves, as exemplary characters, merely because they are not addicted to the pleasures of *sense*. Dissolute habits are the only ones usually visited with the reprobation of society. Vanity, arrogance, selfishness, covetousness, uncharitableness, worldly-mindedness, intolerance, prodigality, knavery, hypocrisy, are as tenderly treated as if the Gospel were perfectly silent respecting them. The bitterest passions are indulged, and the basest arts for advancement resorted to, by men of high religious pretensions, without subjecting them to the loss of caste. Let them be convicted of being drunken or otherwise licentious, and they are *irretrievably ruined!* Not a voice would be raised to compassionate their fall. This is a curious, but incontrovertible fact. It is not easy to perceive on what authority the world selects certain particular vices as the exclusive objects for its castigation; but it is very easy to perceive how the selection must contribute to the indulgence of the others, without any kind whatever of fear or restraint.

† Every one must perceive the superior attraction of the *sermon* to that of the *service* in drawing people to church. To feed the excitement in favour of the former is the grand object of the present day. Divine worship has come to be a very secondary consideration, if it be one at all, with the multitude of most persuasions.

is it not divided into so many religious *factions*, each striving to advance its party interests, and increase its numerical strength, without any consideration of the ties of Christian brotherhood,* or the blessings of religious peace? Do we not exhibit more of angry controversy, intolerance, uncharitableness, hatred, variance, and strife, than are to be found in all other civilized nations of Europe combined? What with the increasing disagreements among Churchmen, the violent disputes between them and Dissenters, and the furious hostility towards Catholics of *both*, our community presents a scene which the Jew and the infidel may behold with rejoicing, but which the true-minded Christian must contemplate with anguish and dismay. To be of *different* hearts and spirits, is the inveterate propensity of those who are commanded to "be of the same mind one towards another;" to indulge mutual feelings of scorn and bitterness is the habitual practice of those on whom the Gospel has laid its eternal injunctions to meekness, forbearance, forgiveness, and boundless love.

While the educated classes of society continue to exhibit the influence of Christianity upon themselves in such a manner, no one seems to notice the effect it must have on those, the question of whose spiritual instruction has added the latest fuel to the flame of religious discord among us. I beg to submit the following considerations to the public.

If the poor have heard anything of religion from the lips of a Christian teacher, they must have learned that it is the most *hallowed* of all subjects the human mind can approach;—that it is clothed in a mysterious sanctity, which forbids the contemplation of it, except with the deepest feelings of devotional awe. What are they to think, then, when they find this subject daily mixed up in the most irreverent and indecent manner with the discussion of temporal affairs—talked of at every dinner table—paraded in every newspaper—placarded on every street-corner—resounded from every hustings and platform in the kingdom, and manifestly made an engine for party uses and political purposes, by men in the highest station, and of the holiest renown? If the poor have heard any thing of religion, they must have learned that its very essence is *charity*;—that the Gospel was announced as the harbinger of "peace and good-will among men," without distinction of colour, or country, or creed. What are they to think, when they see the whole community, with this religion on every lip, embroiled in the most rancorous disputes for its sake;—when they see men stoutly maintaining their own right to liberty of conscience, yet striving to force the consciences of others to an acquiescence in their belief;—when they hear the taunts and invectives,

* A discussion lately arose in the House of Lords, relative to the provision made for the religious instruction of the settlers in Australia, on the presentation of a petition by the Archbishop of Canterbury. An answer was elicited from the Colonial Secretary, whereby it appeared, that of the sum of L.35,793 appropriated to the purpose, L.17,943 were bestowed on the Church of England, L.5400 on that of Scotland, and L.5600 on that of Rome. Upon which the head of the English Church rose and said, that "he did not complain of the amount of the funds allotted to the purpose, *but to all religious denominations being placed on the same footing.*" What is this but an instance of the spirit I have been describing? Of its unjust and uncharitable import, I feel sure the Most Reverend Prelate is perfectly unconscious. But is it, I ask, the spirit of the Gospel? Is it not, on the contrary, the very self-same spirit reproved in the parable of the householder, where certain of the labourers "murmured against the good man of the house," that he had no more regard to *them* than other believers, by the emphatic answer which Christ put into his mouth,—"Is *thine* eye evil because *I* am good?"

the threats and denunciations, hurled on each other's heads by the different Christian persuasions;—when they behold the very ministers of this religion perambulating the kingdom with the Bible in one hand, and a sword, as it were, in the other; giving vent, in the same breath, to praises of God, and imprecations on his creatures, and labouring with all their might to stir up inveterate hatred, suspicion, and wrath? If the poor have heard any thing of religion, they must have learned that its earliest teachers were the most meek and lowly of men;—that truth owed its triumphs, not to the riches of the Church, but to its own inherent sanctity, and the spiritual protection of God. What are they to think, when they hear this truth so perpetually identified with pecuniary endowments, as to make it almost impossible to separate it from the idea of the "mammon of unrighteousness" in the mind;—when they hear of the sinfulness of appropriating the smallest surplus fraction of money conferred by law on one religious persuasion, to the merciful purpose of educating the poor of another; and that every hope of maintaining the purest faith in Christendom must vanish, unless the Church be magnificently tended, and its ministers sumptuously fed? What, I ask again, are the poor to think of all this? They see it with their eyes, they hear it with their ears: it is impressed on their senses with the most persevering energy that a perturbed zeal can inspire men to exert. If they have imbibed any just sentiment of religion, it must be strangely confounded by such sights and sounds. But will it long hold out against their obtrusive influence? Will the effect of the purest precept withstand the force of the most contradictory example? Will the reverence of ordinary minds continue proof against the levity with which religion is daily and hourly treated, and the grossness with which it is abused, and misrepresented, and perverted, to serve the purposes of party aggrandizement, personal interest, and political ambition? Who can imagine it? No wonder, then, if infidelity should spread! No wonder if the poor should be driven from the moorings of faith by this whirlwind of passion, raised in an unholy conflict among churches and sects!

"*Of all things in the world, a prating religion and much talk in holy things does most profane the mysteriousness of it, and dismantles its regards, and makes cheap its reverence, and takes off all fear and awfulness, and makes it loose and garish like the laughters of drunkenness.*" These were the words of one of the brightest ornaments of the Christian Church two centuries ago. With what inimitable fitness and pungency do they apply to the current religion of the present time! It is literally and truly a *prating* religion! He who talks loudest and longest on the subject gains credit for the sublimest piety, and is rewarded with the highest praise. The sober, humble, noiseless, charitable Christian is looked on as unsound in his principles, or lax in his belief.

That there is in the community a vast deal of sincere religion, unaffected piety, and true virtue (some in spite of an erroneous education, and much through the influence of a wiser one), is an undeniable fact. They may be witnessed in all the varied walks of life, and I verily hope and believe among all religious persuasions, in the unassuming meekness of the Christian spirit; in the habitual and unostentatious discharge of duty to God and man; in the balance preserved between the judgment and the affections; in the harmony maintained between profession and practice; in the equal respect observed

for all the Christian obligations; in the reverence for things sacred, that shudders at their introduction in ordinary converse, or their mixture with political strife; in piety without pretension, and in zeal without noise. In innumerable instances are these fruits of true religion to be seen. But their influence is drowned amid the excitement produced by signs of a very different description. The religion of which I have just recounted the symptoms, is not a bustling, babbling, boisterous religion. It does not thrust itself forward, nor trumpet itself forth, to be seen of, and lauded by, *men*. It does not allow the differences between Christian brethren to obliterate the sense of their common faith in the merciful Redeemer. It does not persuade a frail, feeble, short-sighted being to establish an inquisition into the human breast; nor to unravel its motives as if he were divinely commissioned for the purpose; nor to proclaim, without scruple or apprehension, who or how many are to be saved. It does not tempt a poor, weak, miserable sinner to glorify himself as the object of God's peculiar favour; nor to denounce others, in a sweeping sentence, as outcasts from his covenant of grace; nor to measure, by the paltry span of his own paltry affection, the mercy of that Being who is described to us under the emphatic appellation of LOVE—INFINITE, INEFFABLE, ILLIMITABLE LOVE! They who do these things claim to be considered as oracles of inspired wisdom, and monopolize the popular attention by the impassioned fervour of their zeal. It is on their representations of religion, and exhibitions of its influence, that the eyes of the multitude are involuntarily fixed. They imagine they are serving the cause of Christianity. I charge them not with the consciousness of wrong-doing—God forbid I should so presume;—I am simply stating facts, not imputing motives. Without impeaching a single individual, however, I do most implicitly believe that they are undermining the interests of religion to an incalculable extent. I do believe that, on the one hand, by disrobing it of its sanctity, by making it cheap and common to the vulgar eye, by secularizing its heavenly purposes, by perverting it to unhallowed ends; and, on the other hand, by stamping it with an ascetic and puritanical and discouraging character, by despoiling it of its lovely, and attractive, and most merciful aspects, by testifying its influence in words rather than in dispositions and deeds; by limiting its saving powers at the suggestions of a presumptuous imagination, they are spreading far and wide the abominations of infidelity and hypocrisy over the land!

My third proposition I shall endeavour to treat with as much brevity as the subject will admit.

To denominate the proposed system of imparting Scriptural instruction at the public schools for the poor, a *religious education*, is to pervert altogether the meaning of these terms. Were it even free from the objections I have raised against it, I must still deny its capability to answer the ends of what is properly called "a religious education." By this is implied the culture of the youthful mind and disposition, from the earliest period of infancy, in all that is good—the moral and spiritual training of a child "in the way he should go, so that when he is old he may not depart from it." To apply the expression to the process of learning and committing to memory the sacred lessons set before children at school or elsewhere, is worse than absurd. It

is a mischievous imposition on the unreflecting and the credulous. The place where the culture I speak of ought to be conducted, is the sanctuary of *home*. It is a task which God has manifestly committed to the parental hand, and assuredly none are so fitted for its performance as those whom he has bound to the objects of it by the tenderest of human ties. No religious teaching can be comparable for its effect upon the youthful heart to that which falls in the endearing accents of love and gentleness from a mother's lips. None can make so enduring an impression as the conceptions *she* first leads the mind to form on the subject. It is under the domestic roof that impressions should be made, and feelings cherished, and dispositions formed, wherein the religious knowledge of subsequent years will take root, and which devout habits, encouraged in due season, will ripen into the choicest moral fruits. It is there that the good affections should be nurtured, the evil ones corrected, a love of truth and detestation of falsehood implanted, the spirit of selfishness subdued, the habit of obedience established, the sentiment of devotion infused, the feelings of kindness, love, and humanity excited, and those of a contrary nature repressed. This is the religious education of the home and the heart. This is the foundation that must be laid in a general suitableness and docility of disposition for the reception of revealed doctrine, so that, through divine assistance, it will cling to the soul, and fortify it against the cares and temptations of the world, and redound during life to the practical fruits of faith. I am not singular in ascribing so inestimable a value to the domestic training of the young. I am supported by the authority of a dignified divine of unquestionable piety and learning.*

The "Scriptural instruction" of the school, then, must be a meagre substitute at best for the "religious education" of home. But the reliance placed on it has an inevitable tendency to disparage the importance of, and to discourage an attention to, the other. Thus, for instance, instead of invoking all parents, high and low, rich and poor, to the spiritual education of their children, as a sacred duty which they, and they alone, can properly fulfil, we significantly tell them that its responsibility rests elsewhere, and that the schoolmaster will relieve them of the task. Instead of quickening their exertions for the culture of beings whom they have brought into the world, we tempt them to lean on extraneous aid for what they only can effectually perform, and what consequently ought to be the object of their assiduous care. In proportion to the efficacy they are led to ascribe to Scriptural learning and catechetical lecturing, do they undervalue their own endeavours for moulding the dispositions of their offspring. A confidence in the religious teaching *from* home begets a negligence to the moral training *at* home. Evil inclinations are indulged, selfish desires gratified, pernicious impressions made,—peevish tempers are unchecked, artful practices overlooked, lying habits unpunished, and all anxiety is hushed by the reflection that the child is regu-

* Bishop Thirlwall, in the beautiful letters addressed some years ago to the Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, "On the Admission of Dissenters to Academical Degrees."

"I have been accustomed," he says, "to think that the best kind of religious education, if not the only one that deserves that name, is that which is received at home; and that where this is wanting, its place can never be fully supplied by strangers. How little this can be done in a school so limited as to come nearest to the image of a family, must be testified by every one's own experience and reflection. The difficulty increases, and the success of the attempt becomes uncertain and imperfect, in proportion to the size of the school."

larly instructed in the knowledge of sacred things. This is a faithful picture of many a domestic scene.*

Now there is no task which requires such excessive delicacy and discretion as that of instilling religious feelings into the youthful breast. I require not to be reminded of the inefficacy of all our labours for the purpose, without the co-operation of the grace of God. But it will be generally conceded, that, according as the *young* mind is treated, it may be disposed to yield to, or to resist, that grace. We must work through human influences, to render nature, as far as our limited power enables us, amenable to divine influence. We ought, therefore, to employ, for spiritual purposes, the means by which it is usually directed to moral ends. For such ends, we find nature most easily accessible by gentle, temperate, progressive, unobtrusive, seasonable endeavours to propitiate its favour and secure its confidence;—by the avoidance of everything calculated to awaken suspicion or excite distrust—of everything rash, precipitate, or overbearing in attempting to sway the inclinations, or subdue the will. These are the means by which we should endeavour to recommend the sublime truths of the Gospel to the mind.

Nothing of a strictly religious nature should ever be submitted to it as the subject-matter of a *task!* Whatever of such a nature is to be impressed on youth, let it be conveyed through the lips of the instructor, or through the medium of their own reading, trusting to the retention of the memory, without employing it directly as an agent in the work. All that can be judiciously done during the early years of children is to imbue them with religious *sentiment* or *feeling*. Thus much may be effected by representations of the divine and invisible Being as the parent of the universe, and an object of the fondest love. It may be cherished and strengthened at a more advanced age of comprehension, by pointing to the mighty evidences of his power and

* Among other evil habits that owe much of their encouragement to this system, is one of vast and pernicious influence at present, namely, that of considering religion without reference to, or as distinct from, morality. The very slender allusions made to the latter in the favourite preaching of the day, and the very general contempt expressed for such discourses as enforce the moral obligations of the Gospel, are sufficient proofs of the fact. Though there may be no desire to disparage these obligations, yet the habit of treating religion as a thing *per se*—as if it were in its strictest sense at once the *means* and the *end*, must have the inevitable effect of withdrawing the mind from their contemplation, and undervaluing their importance in its sight. It is impossible it could be otherwise. Hence is it that the proverbial signs of religion among us are not such as may be witnessed in its sober and consistent influence on the whole temper, sentiments, conduct, and character of the Christian, but such as are visible in public manifestations of zeal, and outward demonstrations of piety. The anxiety to raise an absorbing interest in favour of the latter, too, is rapidly on the increase. Witness the efforts at present made to bring us back to the Jewish observance of the Sabbath, and the societies formed for the purpose in various quarters of the kingdom. And on what authority? Assuming the appointment of the Sabbath to be as binding under the Christian as the Mosaic dispensation, is its strict observance *more* binding—is it even *so* binding as the moral obligations of the law? Our Saviour took especial pains to shew us that it was *not*, and his apostles, though their pages are loaded with injunctions to obey the latter, have not one word regarding the observance of the former! Is it denied that the Lord's day should be reverentially kept? God forbid. The question simply is, On what ground is it made a matter of paramount importance, and an object of pre-eminent attention? Why are societies formed for the enforcement of that obligation only, concerning which the divine teachers were obviously the least solicitous? And why are they formed to enforce that very observance of it, the rigour of which our Lord expressly reproved? There must be some cause for this extraordinary excitement about a strict obedience to the *fourth* commandment, while all is so still respecting others, as, for instance, the *eighth*, and *ninth*, and *tenth*. Is it that fraud, and slander, and covetousness are *rare* among us? *They never were more rife.* What can it be, then, but a desire to cover the neglect of the weightier matters of the law by more sanctimonious attention to its appointed observances?

goodness in the magnificence of the heavens, the vastness and beauty of the earth, the countless multitude of its inhabitants, the myriads of inferior animals endued with life,—all the work of his creative hand, and to everything, in short, that presents itself to the thoughts or observation calculated to strike the young mind with wonder, admiration, and delight. The truths of *revealed* religion would find a much more ready access to it, if those of *natural* religion were first allowed to sink deep into the breast, and incorporate themselves with the feelings. From the earliest period, it may be observed, children shew a desire to be informed on such subjects. Were this treated with discretion and reserve, it would turn to good account. But we at once glut their curiosity. By overcharging them with information ere they are able to digest it, we deprive it of its salutary effect. Long before any further disclosure is made to them, they ought to be apprised that God has given to man an explicit declaration of his attributes and will in the volume of Sacred Writ, and that to read that volume is a privilege they are to enjoy when their understanding is sufficiently matured. The mind will thus be kept on the stretch of anxiety for the purpose, and in time will seek the desired knowledge with eagerness, and receive it with satisfaction. Meanwhile they may be made acquainted with some of its simplest truths; but on no account should its doctrines be laid before them till they are perfectly capable of appreciating their sanctity. The method in use for their instruction in these, even were they of an age to receive it, I conceive to be beyond measure prejudicial. Nothing can be more detrimental to every good impression and effect than the ordinary trial of skill between so many juvenile combatants, as it were, in the examination of catechisms. At a proper season these should be presented to them for their careful and serious perusal. But instead of questioning them separately as an exercise of memory on the subject, the Christian minister should expound them generally for their common edification.

There seems to be an absolute rage for filling the young with the learning of Scripture. The greatest anxiety is evinced to practise the memory in the power of referring to particular texts, and the chapters and verses where they are to be found—to the historical events of the Bible, and the chronological order in which they occurred, and so forth. That the knowledge of these things should be acquired in the course of life by the calm and deliberate study of the sacred volume, no one can doubt; but what ultimate or practical benefit is to be gained by making the young memory a store-house for its contents? The very haste, and eagerness, and assiduity with which we labour to build up children in the knowledge of Sacred Writ, mar their own object. By founding every thing on these, we deprive them of the aids which Nature herself would opportunely contribute, and which the Divine Being, we may trust, would sanctify to spiritual ends. Sympathy and example, for instance, possess the most powerful influence over human beings. We have no more reason to doubt that God would render them the instruments of good, than that he makes our elaborate efforts to impress the mind and memory conducive to the purpose. But we allow no scope whatever for their exercise. We use every method of constraint to attach youth to religion, and oftentimes produce the very contrary effect. Seeking to take the mind as it

were by storm, we cut ourselves off from all other means of access to it, and failing, as we frequently and unhappily do in this attempt, we fail altogether.

The school-room for the poor, as well as the rich, should, under certain qualifications, be allowed to remain, what it was originally meant to be, a place appropriated to the secular education of youth. I am aware there are numbers among the former, for whose children, on account of their peculiar circumstances, moral and religious instruction must be publicly provided. There are the ill-paid and hard-worked, whom constant toil necessarily withdraws from attention to their offspring. There are the idle and inconsiderate, who are sadly negligent of their duty. There are the destitute and abandoned, who have no sense of it whatsoever.

For the exigency of the two former cases, nothing can be better adapted than the system of infant schools. They may be deemed in such cases as indispensable, to rescue the young at a tender age from that total neglect of their moral culture, which no subsequent care will be able to repair. I cannot view them as an equivalent for the loss of proper parental training, but they are the only thing like a substitute to be found.* In the latter case, where the parents are thoroughly depraved, I confess myself unable to see the benefit which even the infant schools can afford. Their discipline will supply but a feeble antidote for the deadly moral poison imbibed during the intervals which the children pass at home. So long as they are subjected for any portion of the daily cycle to the influence and example of vice in its worst forms, it would be vain to calculate largely on the improvement of their moral condition. Much must be done for society by the legislator, ere the schoolmaster can be expected to reduce the number of its miserable outcasts.

With respect to schools for children beyond the age of infancy, I shall state the qualifications under which I conceive they should be strictly confined to the purpose of secular education.

Brief texts from Scripture, containing some of its beautiful moral lessons, may be introduced with the highest advantage, for they will be committed to memory without any prejudice to their sanctity, which cannot be the case with matters that are purely objects of belief. Passages, for instance, from the divine sermon on the Mount; certain of our Lord's affecting parables, such as the "good Samaritan" and the "prodigal son," would make a deep impression on the susceptible hearts of the young. Farther than this I would not advance. Even the historical parts of the Bible should be reserved for the private study of youth on reaching a certain age. The very mysteriousness with which we seem to invest this book, the holiness with which we obviously regard it, the scrupulousness with which we separate it from the rude or thoughtless touch of childhood, will elicit a desire in the young mind to dip into its treasures, when once it is unfolded to it and permission given for the purpose. Compendiums of Scripture history, such as are compiled for youth, would then be read with avidity. I would have sentiments of natural religion earnestly inculcated in the schools; for this, opportunities will con-

* The schools here alluded to are places for the *moral*, not the *intellectual* training of infants, and where exercise and diversion are the chief occupations. The faculties of the frame should be developed to a certain extent, before any effort is made to cultivate those of the mind. The anxiety displayed by parents and others for the early and rapid advancement of the latter, is founded on a grievous mistake, and productive of the worst effects.

stantly arise out of the subject of the daily tasks. In expatiating on the proofs of God's power and parental goodness, the teacher may furnish food for thought to children of a more advanced age, by allusions to the fuller disclosure made of these in the divine book written expressly for our instruction, and for the knowledge of which they are to be fitted by the discipline they are then undergoing. They might with the best effect be encouraged to good conduct, by being taught to look forward to this knowledge as its reward. All religious information and instruction imparted to the very young, however, should be introduced, as it might seem incidentally, and not at stated periods, or in a dogmatic tone. They will make the deeper impression by being insinuated, rather than taught. Any person conversant with the habits and feelings of children must have remarked how much more easily their attention may be engaged than exacted.

Great benefit may be derived from impressing them with the idea that their well-being and happiness in life can only be promoted by their virtuous conduct and strict discharge of all their duties, and that misery of mind is the inseparable companion of sin and wickedness. Many pious people imagine it incumbent on them to excite the hopes and fears of children with reference to a future state. I believe this, like most of our practices on the subject, to be founded in egregious error. Children are rarely to be influenced by such hopes and fears; but they may be moved by the consideration of what is to affect them in their present state of being, and we have the authority of the divine teachers for making it an element of instruction at all times for our moral improvement. Nothing that tends or contributes to this improvement ought to be neglected by the schoolmaster; it is completely within his province, and will prepare the mind of youth, far more than his teaching of Scriptural doctrines, for turning to profit the religious instruction they are to acquire at the hands of the Christian minister. Within the schools, order and obedience should be enforced as much as is possible, but never at one period for any lengthened time. Propriety of manner should be inculcated, and most earnest and affectionate exhortations given to mutual feelings, and habits of justice and kindliness and good-will among all. To sustain a lively sense of devotion the daily work should be commenced with a prayer, reverentially delivered by the teacher, the strictest silence and attention being first enjoined. Every possible solemnity should be thrown round this sacred act; and in order to such effect, its form should be of the briefest and simplest kind,—otherwise the attention will more or less inevitably flag, and the solemn impression be consequently destroyed.

This is all, beyond the mere secular instruction of the young, that, in my humble view of the matter, ought to be entrusted to the conduct of the schoolmaster. To their respective religious teachers I would strictly confine the duty of expounding to them the doctrines of the Gospel. I would affectionately exhort *them*, moreover, not to overload the minds of the young with Scriptural instruction; but to impart it gradually, according to the expansion of the faculties, and at all times and in all cases to inculcate the knowledge and belief of sacred doctrine, with a view to the *moral* and *practical fruits of the Gospel*. Much importance seems to be attached to the amount of time to be set apart from the operations of the school, for their ministrations. One or two days in the week, it is said, are to be appropriated for the pur-

pose. If even the lesser of these periods is to be wholly dedicated to the religious instruction of any number of children at once, the effect will inevitably be to create an impression unfavourable to the subject. I do most solemnly deprecate, and protest against, every attempt to harass the young mind with this subject, as the most unwise, the most unprofitable, and the most injurious system that can possibly be pursued. If it be really meant to impose this kind of discipline on the children of the poor in the expectation of making them *religious*, I, for my part, must acknowledge, with the bitterest feelings of sorrow and disappointment, that I utterly despair of its success.

Long after I had committed to paper the substance of the views contained in the foregoing pages, there appeared in a public journal a very striking corroboration of them from the pen of a Roman Catholic divine.* The coincidence of opinion, and even occasionally of phraseology, is so remarkable, that I am tempted to transcribe a passage of some length to shew that there are other minds as deeply impressed with the errors of our system.

"If this age be," says the reverend author, "what it has been significantly called, an age of *cant*, to what is it mainly owing? Is it not to this—that religion is so constantly and perversely misplaced and mishandled, so perpetually obtruded upon us on all public occasions, and so wholly out of time and season, that it begins, necessarily, at last to be treated by some as a nuisance or bore,—is taken up by others as a mere *mot d'ordre*, becomes a sort of rallying phrase in the mouth of faction, is talked of loudest and longest by those who feel its influence least, and thus sinks, almost of course, in the general estimation, being borne down as it were by the weight of these accumulated scandals? How are we to raise up religion from this deep degradation? Only by suffering her to withdraw into her own sanctuary, and from thence exercise her blessed influence on the public, and by the instrumentality of her own chosen ministers; and by letting her concentrate her private influence, unchecked and undisturbed, in her next most sacred asylum, the family tabernacle. On this account, in the second place, I would not have her domiciliate in our schools.

"And now, regarding the matter in a still higher point of view, I would ask to what purpose overcharge the minds of *children* at all, either in school or out of it, with the mysterious revelations of religion? Shall I be answered in the usual common-place, that it is because religion is the only sure foundation of morals? But this is utterly misstating and mistaking the question. Religion is assuredly,—and who doubts it?—the best foundation for morals in *moral agents*. But are children such,—for it is of them there is question,—the children of your infant schools, for instance, averaging from three to four years of age? No: in a moral sense, their young minds are in a state of chaos, where you have first to form the soil by a concentration of its elements before you can possibly lay anything like a steady foundation. Religion is the very perfection of morality; a sort of sacramental confirmation of the moral instinct, giving it a higher tone, a firmer grasp, and a larger sphere. Then why should we squander its superlative perfection where the moral sense is not yet formed into a positive consistency? But in the precipitation of a mistaken zeal we forget all this, begin at the wrong end, and vainly

* The Rev. Thaddeus O'Malley, who lately addressed a series of letters on the subject, "To the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland."

See XIX Psalm—

waste our labour in raising the solid superstructure of religion upon a soft, unconsolidated, yielding surface, where it is, of course, soon swallowed up and lost sight of.

"This theory, my lords, is too clearly in accordance with truth and reason not to be confirmed by experience. What says the proverb—that moral coin, which, coming from the mint of the public sense, bears the print of the public countenance as the guarantee of its value? 'A young saint makes an old devil.' Is it not too true? is it not too often so? Look around you, and will you not find that those in whom an unenlightened piety has sought to implant prematurely the principles of religion, are the first to lose them, and losing them, they are they who lose them irrecoverably. I, for my part, am strongly impressed with the idea, that much of the practical infidelity, much of the religious indifferentism that prevails, is fairly attributable to this cause. So long as all that is most sacred, mysterious, and sublime in the sublimest of all religions, is heedlessly bandied about in schoolboys' mouths,—so long as it is made the irksome task-work of froward and impatient youth,—so long as it is given as a routine lesson which they must spell while they yawn, and which they must repeat at the peril of the rattan, with all the edifying precision of right orthodox parrots, to what other result can you look forward than to this? that when their understanding becomes mature it will find this faint religious impression so confounded in the crowd of their other childish notions, as to share the same fate with them; that having learned the mysteries of the nursery and the mysteries of religion at the same time, and now finding the one to be fables, it will be tempted to count the others little better; and that as it was the object of the former to govern them as children by acting on their childish fears, so was it the object of the latter to forestall their faith, to govern them as men by their credulity?

"As the surest means of obviating this fatal mischief,—a mischief which any one acquainted with the world must be aware I do not in the least exaggerate,—I would not only have the 'special' religious instruction imparted solely in the Church, and, if possible, by a churchman only, but I would have it imparted somewhat in the manner of a mysterious initiation, to be graduated on a scale of preparatory aptitude in the pupils, to be held out as the reward of superior docility and virtue, and to be looked forward to with mingled feelings of impatience and of awe,—as a revelation from above that was to teach them something far more sacred, more noble, and more pure than anything they had yet learned. It was thus that in her best days the Christian Church gradually initiated her children, even when these children were grown to the full stature of men, with the knowledge of her mysteries; it is thus, too, that Providence has gradually initiated mankind into the more awful revelations of his eternal truths; and as the ways of Providence are ever just and true, it is thus that mankind, humbly following the example, should gradually initiate each other.

"But I would not deprive the schools, at the same time, as I have shewn, of a *general* religious and moral instruction; general, in a more strict sense, as it is alike common to all Christian sectaries, namely, natural religion and the sound morality deducible from it. It is a superstition to allege that there is no morality but in the Gospel. No doubt, the Gospel is the loftiest and

the purest of the three moral revelations of God to man; but he who brought us this last and best, has he not himself told us expressly, that 'he came not to destroy but to fulfil' the other two—the revelation graven originally on the heart of man, and the revelation graven subsequently on the stone tables of the law? Nay, is not the best evidence of the truth of the Gospel moral, its admirable harmony with our moral instinct, and its beautiful and benevolent adaptation to our moral wants? It is idle, then, to tell me, that by diligently cultivating in the pupils that moral sense or instinct in the way I have described, with an occasional reference to the revealed confirmation of it they have already learned, or are yet to learn from the minister of religion, I have not done as much for morals as it is the proper business of a school to do; and that in imbuing them with the *sentiment* of natural religion, by raising their minds to the wonders of the wisdom and the bounty of God, and kindling that sentiment into a devotional affection by teaching them to sing together sacred hymns to his praise, I have not done as much in the way of general religious instruction as would become a teacher who is a mere layman, charged with no mission to preach a holier word."

I have now completed the task. Whether I have succeeded in establishing the truth of the propositions I laid down at the commencement, the public must judge. I would not have it imagined, however, that my speculations (if they be, indeed, only such) have been *got up* to serve the present occasion; they are at least entitled to the benefit of whatever credit may attach to them as the fruit of long and matured reflection. It will be a source of the highest gratification to me should they contribute to smooth the way to one, uniform, comprehensive plan of education for the people. But this is far from being the whole of my design in giving them publicity. The obstruction of such a plan is, in my mind, but a portion of the evil that must arise from the obstinacy of the different religious parties in insisting on the teaching of their peculiar doctrines at the schools. Were this practice even free from the mischiefs I have ascribed to it, the worst consequences, in a social point of view, are to be apprehended from its adoption. Instead of bringing the children of all persuasions into habits of amicable intercourse, and binding them together by the ties of mutual confidence (notwithstanding their differences of belief), they are to be draughted into schools *according to these differences*, thus laying the foundation for religious acrimony and jealousy through life! The inevitable result will be, to foment the hateful spirit of sectarianism where it needs so much to be assuaged; to enlist the humbler ranks in the fierce struggles of theological warfare, which it is so desirable to abate; to scatter the seeds of religious rancour over every quarter of the community; to perpetuate the sway of bigotry and intolerance among all classes and parties, and to render society one vast, interminable, intolerable scene of deadly discord and implacable strife. I shudder at the contemplation of such a state of things, and look with most intense and impatient longing for the spread of "pure and undefiled" Christianity. Is the clamour of religious controversy *never* to cease? Is society to be endlessly disturbed by the yells, and distracted by the jars of those who stand alike pledged, on the surety of their common faith, to serve under the one glorious banner of the God of PEACE?

Are those "wretched contentions, which," to use the striking words of Chillingworth, "now rend and tear, not the coat, but the very members and bowels of Christ, and which mutual pride and tyranny, and cursing, and damning, and killing would fain make immortal,"—are these at *no* period to have their blessed consummation? Are we still to go on in daring defiance of that holy obligation to charity, laid on us for the express purpose of uniting in *heart* and *spirit* those who might be divided in *opinion* and *belief*?

But a brief while ago, certain symptoms of a relenting spirit appeared. The maxims of a merciful and tolerant wisdom seemed to prevail. The united strength of bigotry and tyranny could no longer cope with the energies of an insulted people, and the voice of reason was at length heard where the dictates of justice had long been scorned. The last remaining traces of religious persecution were swept away. There was an evident reluctance in the performance of the act, which, it was hoped, would soon melt under the influence of a generous policy. We were unhappily deceived. All our pleasing visions were vain and illusory. We had but "scotched the snake, not killed it." Its venom still survives to sting the peace of the community. The same deadly hate, the same irreconcileable antipathy, the same indefinable apprehension, agitate men's bosoms now as they did then. No better method approves itself to them for the treatment of minds under the dominion of error; no stronger anxiety is felt for amalgamating the various branches of the great family of the Redeemer. Still is there in innumerable breasts a burning sense of jealousy, suspicion, and distrust. We can no longer, indeed, enact laws for the suppression of error, just as we have been accustomed to do for the suppression of vice—that day is gone by. The world is sick of seeing such "fantastic tricks" played "before high heaven." Nature is fairly tired out in the toil of racking incorrigible recusants with personal pains. But bigotry, nevertheless, retains her unbroken strength. Defeated in one quarter, she flies to another, and defends her position with unflinching perseverance. So long as she had legislative enactments at her command, religious errors, simply as such, gave her but little concern; she could, even without scruple, supply the cost for their encouragement. While she had the bodies of her adversaries in the faith under the subjection of the law, she took no interest whatever in the safety of their souls; she enjoyed such exquisite satisfaction in the humiliation of the Catholics, that in the very fulness of her heart she consented to endow their church. Thousands were annually voted without a murmur, to educate young men for the Romish ministry in Ireland! Not a word of objection was then raised on the score of a false religion; but things are changed. The whole apparatus of penal laws was snatched from her hands, and she was driven to try some new device for stirring up the slumbering intolerance of the public. Now, then, that she has no more the power of applying the thumb-screw of an inflictive statute to the Catholics, her grand resource is to deny them (as far as she may be able to effect) the blessing of the light of knowledge. This is a strange thing to tell of in a Christian country; but it is unhappily true as it is strange.

The meaning of a *national* system of education is, that it shall be accessible to, and available for, the poor of *all* religious persuasions; otherwise, it be-

comes sectarian and exclusive, and, of course, ceases to be national. If Scripture is to be taught at the schools, there is clearly no other possible way of meeting the difficulty arising out of religious differences, under a national system, than by dispensing with everything in the shape of doctrine as a matter of instruction there. This was with great reluctance, and after a prodigious effusion of bile, conceded in the case of Ireland. But the prospects of bigotry have since then lost somewhat of their brightness: the turn of events has not proved so fortunate as she expected. She does not feel quite so much at her ease, and is dissatisfied. Here, then, she resolves to plant her foot and make a stand! With hatred in her heart, and fury in her tongue, she struggles for the principle of "*special*" religious instruction at the schools for the poor. If she can establish this principle, she will succeed to her perfect content; it will be a sure barrier to the Catholics, and certain of the Dissenters, at least; it must exclude the parties obnoxious to her from the benefits of a publicly administered education. They will have to trust to their own resources, which, in many instances, are those of poverty itself. But this is not her only stay of hope; she has found out another principle, which has already served, in many quarters, to rally her forces against an impartial plan for the endowment of schools. And what is this? Why, that it is incompatible with the duty of a Protestant state to furnish the means of instructing the children of Roman Catholics;—that it is sinful in the sight of God to countenance their errors, by assigning them a public grant for such a purpose? And this is announced as coolly and as gravely, and is listened to as profoundly, as if this Protestant state had never given, nor was at this present moment of time giving, thousands for the self-same purpose to the Catholics in Ireland, in Australia, in Canada, and, for aught I know, in various other colonial dependencies of Great Britain.

These are specimens of Protestant zeal, which for boldness, at least, considering the era, can scarcely find their match in the most rampant days of Romish intolerance. Conceive the idea of leaving multitudes of young, helpless, unformed beings, subjects of the British empire, children of the Divine Redeemer, in debasing ignorance, on the plea of discountenancing the errors of their creed! There they are—born by inevitable and uncontrollable destiny—of Catholic parents, the parents themselves clinging with the most natural and blameless attachment to the faith of their fathers, and with an instinctive feeling common to all men, desirous to have their children worship under the same roof with themselves. There they are,—the victims of poverty, ignorance, and superstition, pleading for a share in the blessings of that education we are at last about to diffuse over the land. And what is the answer to them? "*We are bound by our Protestant principles to deny you even the crumbs of instruction that fall from our table, unless you consent, in return, to pledge yourselves to our articles of faith.*" Just as if the conscience of a Catholic were a thing that we were not only entitled, but required, to despise;—just as if we imagined it ought to be as easy for him to cast off his religious scruples as his cloak;—just as if we thought he should have no more difficulty in sending his child to subscribe a Protestant creed, than to learn the Alphabet or the Rule-of-three! O bigotry, what a fearfully malignant being thou art! And how weak as well as wicked! Experience has taught

thee nothing—absolutely nothing! Ages have rolled away, memorable for the blood which has been as fruitlessly as it has been profusely shed upon thine altars, to make men forswear their avowed belief; and yet thou hast still to learn that everything like dogmatic opposition to dissent and error can only have the one effect—of extending their sway and prolonging their existence!

I venerate the principles of our English Church as warmly as any of her members, and would as ardently desire to see them the objects of similar veneration to all; but this only enhances my grief, that so many of her sons should tarnish her fame by such proceedings. It is painful beyond measure to think that the spirit of a spiteful intolerance should dwell within the pale of an institution which, but for this baneful influence, would conciliate general esteem and affection. As for those of the sectaries who raise their voices with such astounding violence against their Catholic brethren, it is not an easy matter to speak of them with ordinary patience. *They* seem to found their title to scandalize the largest portion of the Christian world on the mere presumption of a *Protestant name*, as if nothing were needed but a sturdy and vociferous denial of the errors of Rome to constitute a sound belief. I presume not to judge *any* class of Christians; but I would humbly venture to remind some who are so loud in their condemnation of Roman Catholic errors, that the simple protestation against what is wrong, does not, of itself, imply the persuasion of that which is right.

It is my implicit belief, that truth can only thrive in the atmosphere of its own creating. *That* atmosphere is charity—the blessed and eternal and godlike charity of the Gospel! It is the atmosphere with which the Divine original of truth sought most sedulously to surround us. May we not be well convinced he did so from motives of the most sublime wisdom, as regards the interests of that truth itself? Can we have a doubt that he considered it most conducive to those interests, by giving a free scope to the mind in the quest and appreciation of truth? But mankind, unhappily, have never allowed it the liberty of breathing in its own native region. Everything is done, even from infancy, to dilute and pervert the sentiment of charity, as it comes fresh to the heart from the well-spring of inspiration in the divine exposition of the Apostle. To circulate there, within a limited compass and in a given quantity, is all that is permitted. So far as mutual sympathies and interests claim its exercise, *there* only is it allowed to flow freely. To advance beyond these limits is denounced and proscribed as "false liberality," "latitudinarianism," or some such term, expressly devised for the purpose of intimidation. Nothing so effective as an obnoxious epithet to raise an insurmountable prejudice, or quench a generous flame! And what is the extent of this liberality on which orthodoxy has laid an immoveable interdict? Does it propose that all creeds should be deemed as equally true, or as alike acceptable to the Redeemer? Does it propose that any man should be taught to view with indifference what faith he professes, or to look for salvation irrespectively of his belief? Nothing of this. It simply maintains, that as it is the duty of man to abstain from judging his brother harshly, even on the score of his moral offences, *much more* is it his duty to do so on account of his religious errors;—that as he is bound to think evil of none, unless on

palpable proofs of criminality, *much more* is he bound to think evil of none for their misconception of truth, or misinterpretation of doctrine;—that as even natural feeling or temporal interest prompts us to live in harmony and love with those of kindred sentiments, *much more* does the Gospel require us so to live with those of a contrary faith and discordant opinions. It maintains, in short, that, as it seems impossible there should be an uniformity of belief among Christian brethren, *all* should labour to remedy the evil by the methods expressly appointed for the purpose; namely, by mercy, meekness, forbearance, forgiveness, kindness, compassion, brotherly love, charity,—and thus effectually "preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." Is *this* false liberality? Is this latitudinarianism? Is it not rather of the very pith, and core, and marrow of evangelical religion?

I cannot conclude without adverting to a topic of the deepest interest connected with the question I have been discussing, and which claims from me a few moments' attention. I allude to the *moral* results likely to accrue from the education of the poor according to our fondly cherished system, and of which the most extravagant expectations are formed.

In these expectations, I must fairly acknowledge, I do not participate. I believe them to be greatly exaggerated, because much of the corruption prevalent among the lower classes may be traced to the incompetency of this very system to promote true religion and virtue among their superiors. Till a more enlightened mode of education be *universally* adopted, no reasonable hope can be entertained of raising the moral character of the people. Numbers will, doubtless, be *intellectually* benefited by the diffusion of knowledge, and society will profit to a certain extent by the increased intelligence of her humbler members. But looking at that society in all its aspects and bearings, I cannot persuade myself that vice and crime are to be eradicated by the magic wand of the schoolmaster, or that even when he has banished ignorance from the land, this goodly fabric of Great Britain is to be a paradise. Were the disorders of the poor the result of propensities peculiar to them,—had they their sole nourishment from the soil in which they are visibly engendered,—did they grow up and fertilize in a climate remarkable for the salubrity of its moral atmosphere and the riches of its spiritual fruits, and were they the only exceptions to the excellence of its productions, nothing would be brighter than the prospect of purifyiug the habits of that class by the same process of cultivation, which (if such were the case) must have brought the rest of the community to so healthful a condition. But such is *not* the case, nor are the illiterate poor more vicious or corrupt than their educated neighbours. It is because of the injuries they inflict on society in the shape of *crimes*, that they are generally held responsible for all its moral evils. Now, their crimes may be a fair criterion of their state of morals at one period, as compared with another; but as compared with the state of morals in the ranks above them, they are none. In the latter case, there are no materials whereby any thing like a just comparison could be formed; but something may be collected from observation and reflection to lessen the preponderating weight of ignominy usually cast upon the poor.

Their offences are such as to bring them within the gripe of the law, and consequently to force them into notoriety. They consist, to a great extent,

in outrages, violences, breaches of the peace,—these being the crimes to which their peculiar circumstances and temptations render them liable. Passions, unrestrained by social causes that have the effect of controlling them in higher stations, drive the idle and dissolute of the humbler ranks into numerous excesses. Scenes of low debauchery are productive of broils and personal conflicts, often of a dangerous, sometimes a destructive, character. Misery and wretchedness stimulate many to depredations of various kinds, all heavily visited on detection; to avoid which, they are occasionally hurried, by wild and sudden impulse, into deeds of blood. These things become the subjects of judicial investigation, and accounts of them are circulated through every quarter of the land; they naturally fill the mind with horror, and society resounds with a clamour about the crimes of the poor.

On the other hand, the vicious habits and practices of the opulent and educated are seldom such as to incur the notice of legal authority, or even to excite the attention of the public. While they are united in a common league to discover and punish the offences of the poor, policy binds them in their several spheres to maintain a decorous silence regarding their own. Indignation against vice, and zeal for its suppression in lowly life, seem in many cases to be a kind of compromise which they make with their consciences for the sins they themselves commit. It is, moreover, a social—not a moral or religious—restraint which prevents numbers from doing things most galling to our sight in the conduct of the poor. What, for instance, arrests the hand of him who cheats from stealing, but the fear of detection and the sense of shame? Let the thief and the cheat change their relative positions, and their habits will undergo a similar transformation. See how the vengeance of the law and of society vents itself exclusively on the poor! And yet, in this very instance of moral transgression, the balance of virtue would be found greatly in their favour. The amount and extent of their depredations on property are but trifling when compared with the frauds and exactions practised by those who have neither poverty nor ignorance to plead in excuse. It has been observed, too, and I believe with equal truth and severity, that "the harshest rogues are not always those of the highway and the hovel." Many an unhappy culprit, imbued with better feelings, is tempted by misfortune into an infraction of law;—many a child of prosperity is of so depraved a disposition, as to acknowledge no rule over his passions, except what is exacted by law. We hear nothing of numerous crimes committed by educated men, either because no penalty attaches to them, or because exposure has been compounded for by some private influence or means. The purse is a mighty engine of concealment!

It seems to me, then, that the transgressions of the lower orders assume their violence of character much more in consequence of their abject and degraded condition, than of their ignorance of all moral and religious obligation. I infer this from the number of men to be found in higher stations, to whom no such ignorance can be attributed, and whose habits (with the exception of attempts on human life*) are as villanous as those of the worst of miscreants among the sons of penury—men who live by perpetual plunder on a great and systematic scale, who fatten on the spoils of the widow and the

* This exception must be taken with much reservation, as the practice of duelling among the educated classes will testify.

orphan, and sweep whole families to destruction by the basest of arts, under the semblance and through the chicanery of law. It is not any moral feeling which restrains such men from acts of violence; they can accomplish all their atrocious purposes without them. But men of a similar stamp, in a state of recklessness and destitution, exist, *only by waging perpetual war with law and order*. If, as Lord Brougham professes to believe,* the training of infant-schools will effectually rid society of this latter class of persons, no one will derive more heartfelt enjoyment from the success of the experiment than myself. That such schools, under proper management, will be productive of extensive good, I sincerely rejoice to believe; but whether they will be equal to counteract the demoralizing effects of wide-spread misery and degradation, appears to me much more doubtful than it seems to his lordship.

In reflecting on this subject, the powerful tendency of evil example in the higher walks of life to corrupt those who move in its subordinate stations, continually presents itself to my mind. Its influence uniformly descends in the social scale. The rich are altogether free of any moral contagion from the poor; but the poor are affected beyond measure, in their conduct and character, by the conduct and character of the rich. The accumulated weight of vice collected in the upper regions of society bears perpetually upon them, so that, in order to resist it, even as they do, they are mercifully endued by Providence with moral strength proportioned to the task. The crimes which so foully stain their annals are, for the most part, confined to a few, sunk in the lowest depths of degradation. The vast body of the poor, I feel convinced, might challenge competition for moral worth with their more prosperous neighbours. Considering these things, then, my apprehension is, that the vices of the lower orders, notwithstanding all our teaching, will keep pace, to a much greater extent than many seem to expect, with the degeneracy of the higher classes. Did this influence only affect them in its ordinarily indirect and tacit manner, still, I think, there would be sufficient ground for fear; but it is active, absolute, and overbearing. The rich are not content with confining their powers of corruption to the mere manifestation of vice in their characters and conduct; they wantonly and deliberately lay siege to the virtue of the poor!

I might enumerate various instances where they are the wilful and direct aggressors in corrupting their humbler brethren, and where the latter have, nevertheless, to sustain all the shame and blame of the corruption. Time, however, presses, and I must confine myself to the mention of a single case; but it is one so monstrous and glaring as to be quite sufficient for my purpose. I allude to the proceedings that take place during election contests throughout the kingdom.

In these contests are numbers of men of birth and station, aided by hosts of agents of a certain stamp and education, systematically employed in debauching the manners, stimulating the cupidity, purchasing the perfidy, and, by means of intimidation, overcoming the stedfastness and integrity of the constituency of the empire. Thousands would faithfully discharge the sacred trust reposed in them by their country, if they were allowed to exercise their own free will. Thousands would escape the sin of acting contrary to their honest views of what might best promote the interests of that country, for the sake of a miserable bribe, if it were not that the mercenary tools of

* Letter to the Duke of Bedford on National Education.

wealth and power lie in wait to pollute their souls by the ignominious offer. But who thinks of the corruption of the poor man's virtue when compared with the indulgence of the rich man's vanity? How idle such a thought! The object of pursuit must be tried for at every cost, and at a tremendous cost is it often obtained, of the money of the one and the morals of the other. Where does the responsibility lie? Who is to sustain the guilt of all the dissoluteness, the bribery, the perjury, the intimidation, the suppression of truth, the evasion of law, the perversion of right, and the thousand atrocities that follow in the train of an election contest? Who? The ignorant elector or the educated candidate? He that takes a bribe when tempted by distress, or he who proffers it when prompted by ambition? Answer this, ye men who legislate for the religious instruction of the people, and blush with the deepest crimson of remorse, while ye bear involuntary witness to the turpitude of your proceedings! What! Do ye presume to vote away the public money for an avowed object, which ye are secretly determined, as far as in ye lies, and when it serves your purpose, to obstruct and undermine? Have ye the effrontery to boast of being friendly to the education of the poor, conducted upon Christian principles, knowing that ye yourselves will be among the first to tempt them to spurn at and set those principles at nought? Away with such profligacy! What a mockery of all virtue is it—what a fraud on common sense—what deep and disgusting hypocrisy, to enact laws for conferring religious knowledge on those whose minds you are habitually besieging with the grossest arts of the most abominable seduction!

Viewing such instances of moral depravity in connexion with those evidences of the spurious Christianity that prevails among the educated classes of society previously enumerated, I am more strongly confirmed in my opinion, that the religious training of the young is conducted on unsound and pernicious principles; and that by commencing where we ought to end, namely, with instruction in Christian *doctrine*, we fail in establishing the influence of Christian *precept* on the mind, and thus, as I set out with saying, make the religion of thousands consist in a mere speculative and barren *belief*—in a holiday garment, as it were, to be reserved for special purposes and public occasions, instead of an every-day garb, to be worn unintermittingly, and adapted to all the scenes, and seasons, and situations of life.

Something must be done to reform and purify the manner of educating the rich, before even the wisest system can be productive of the desired effects among the poor. It is vain to look for any permanent or beneficial change in the moral habits of the latter, while they remain exposed, not merely to the evil example, but to the corrupting assaults of their superiors. In taking leave of the subject, therefore, I would most solemnly and emphatically warn the wealthy and prosperous against indulging the notion, that the spiritual instruction they are solicitous to bestow on their humbler brethren can turn to profitable account, unless they crown the gift by exhibiting the influence of true religion on themselves. I would remonstrate with them, on behalf of the poor, in the beautiful language of Ophelia:—

> "Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
> Show *them* the steep and thorny way to heaven,
> Whilst, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
> Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
> And recks not his own read."

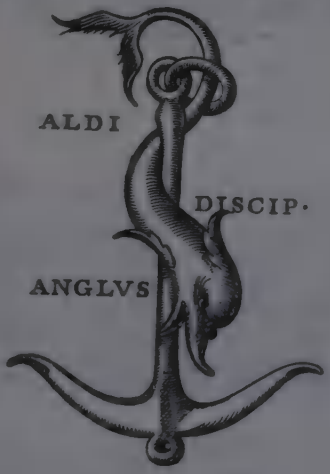
And, in conclusion, I would bespeak their calm, and earnest, and unprejudiced attention to a passage from the works of Hannah More, as indisputably true as it is strikingly apposite to the proceedings of the present period. These are her words:—

"Vain will be all endeavours after partial and subordinate amendment. Reformation must begin with the great, or it never will be effectual. Their example is the fountain from whence the vulgar draw their habits, actions, and characters. *To expect to reform the poor while the opulent are corrupt, is to throw odours into the stream while the springs are poisoned!*"

PRINTED BY NEILL & COMPANY, OLD FISHMARKET, EDINBURGH.

REMARKS UPON RELIGIOUS TESTS AT THE ENGLISH UNIVERSITIES.

BY W. OKE MANNING, JUN. ESQ.



LONDON:
WILLIAM PICKERING,
1846.

Reprinted from the Morning Chronicle.

C. WHITTINGHAM, PRINTER, CHISWICK.

REMARKS UPON RELIGIOUS TESTS AT THE ENGLISH UNIVERSITIES.

MR. William Dougal Christie's exertions in the cause of University Reform have, I believe, produced a gradual but considerable effect, both within and without the walls of Parliament. Many who at first would hardly entertain his proposition, seem to have entered upon a wavering faith as to the validity of the arguments with which they have heretofore opposed him; and to have advanced at any rate as far as the Baillie Nichol Jarvie's cautious admission that "there is some glimmerings o' common sense about that creature Dougal."

But there are so many points of deep interest in themselves, and possessing so immediate a bearing upon the subject, which have never been brought forward in the discussions on this question, that I am induced to invite attention to them in the following observations. And this I do the more readily, from the close connection which many of the following remarks have with some of the most important principles that will have to be contested in the great battle on education, which seems to be inevitable in the ensuing session of Parliament.

And that the battle is inevitable, all the friends of comprehensive measures respecting education must rejoice. For the difficulties inseparable from the question are so numerous, that one could hardly wonder that any minister, who could escape the subject, should be willing to avoid the turmoil of antagonist pretensions which such discussions have never failed to awaken. Look either at home or abroad. Think of the high-minded and accomplished Villemain, now happily restored to his friends, after having been shattered for a time by the conflict in a manner that it is fearful to remember. Look at Van der Weyer, taken from his happy and honourable post to attempt the solution of similar difficulties in Belgium, and withdrawn from his arduous task at the cost of a brain fever endangering his life. Look at our own eminently practical Sir Robert Peel, staggered at the very height of his career by the difficulties of reconciling conflicting religious pretensions, permanently alienating many of his supporters by his Maynooth grant, carrying his Irish Colleges Bill by

the assistance of his political opponents, and obliged to abandon his Factory Education Bill with the mournful farewell that it must be to a period of at least greater forbearance that measures of that class must be postponed.

But we have reason to rejoice that, with all their difficulties, the questions at issue respecting education are of far easier solution in this country than upon the Continent; for we have not here to attempt to construct a system of positive religious faith out of elements of habitual and, in many cases, inveterate scepticism. Neither have we to endeavour to draw large masses from a corrupted to a purer faith, with the risk that many may exchange their belief in mingled truth and error for an unbelief in any truth to cheer and gladden. And this last risk, inseparable it is to be feared from every extensive religious reformation, is of all others the one most painful to contemplate. For faith in the spiritual world, mingled with almost any amount of credulity, seems preferable to that low materialism which holds communion with no impulses but those of sense. For my own part, far from that zeal which would subvert what it disapproves, but is careless of what it can substitute, I should hesitate to destroy a Pagan's idol, if I should thereby leave him without a God. But these besetting difficulties of questions respecting education on the Continent are the very reverse of those which embarrass educational reformers in this country. Our difficulties here arise not from indifference but from intolerance; not from absence of faith, but from excess of zeal; we have not to animate scepticism, but to moderate enthusiasm. Our dangers arise from those who fight the battle of their faith at the expense of their charity; whose belief in their respective creeds is so absorbing that they are unable to view religion otherwise than through the medium of sectarian partizanship. Happy, indeed, shall I be if in the following observations I am able, as I trust I shall, to abate, however slightly, the pretensions of religious exclusiveness, and to advance, even by one grade, the much needed duties of mutual forbearance.

That University reform, especially in respect to Religious Tests, should be advocated at the same time with schemes for popular education, seems especially desirable for many reasons. By none should such a measure be more earnestly promoted than by those who desire that religious information and improvement should go hand-in-hand with the progress of secular instruction; for it is obvious that we are now in no slight danger lest antiquated institutions may have formed a class who, remaining stationary when all around are on the advance, are more and more in the back-ground as progress takes its

course. The danger is already imminent that the laity may be so far in advance of the clergy as to reverse the positions heretofore held between the pastor and his flock. We have seen in England clergymen in numbers that are really startling at first sight, though bearing but a small proportion to the general body, either openly going over to the Romish Church, or adopting more or less of the Roman rites and faith while continuing to hold the benefices of the establishment. But in no single instance have we found that a clergyman who has gone over to Rome has prevailed upon his congregation to follow him. On the contrary, the country has presented a series of oppositions on the part of the laity to the alterations attempted to be introduced by the clergy. We have thus many examples of a clergy who are going backward, while their flock is on the advance. Now if, as I believe to be the case, the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness resulting from Tests at the Universities generates a narrow and intolerant feeling, which, from the partial seclusion of their profession, is much less frequently eradicated by intercourse with the world in the clergy than in the lay students; if from this it results that the clergy and the laity are at variance, because the latter demand a comprehensive, while the former adopt a narrow construction of the rites and doctrines of the Church of England; assuredly none should desire more than the friends of the establishment, and of religious education generally, that the intolerance, inevitably resulting from Religious Exclusiveness at the great institutions for education, should be superseded by a spirit of comprehension and forbearance, which may keep the clergy advancing in the same career of progress as the laity, and may tend to that hearty sympathy and affectionate union which make the relation of a good clergyman and a good congregation one of the most interesting and important that can subsist among mankind.

But the importance of the abrogation of Religious Tests at the Universities is even greater with respect to the laity than it is with respect to the clergy. If, as I think I shall be able to show, not only a spirit of intolerance, but a spirit of insincerity, of unfair casuistry, of religious formalism, is induced by the system of University Tests, then I think that those classes who are usually trained at the Universities, and all other classes too, have no slight interest in seeking the abrogation of these Tests.

It is at present the tendency, I may almost say the fashion, of the age to be engaged in plans of popular improvement. Almost every new scheme that presents itself is of the "for the million" class. No one can rejoice more heartily than I

do that public attention has taken this direction. Assuredly the philanthropist's happiest scope lies where the greatest amount of evil exists, and where the largest amount of good may be promoted. But, nevertheless, I believe that this admirable tendency is at the present day in danger of diverging into a false direction. The desire to elevate and purify the masses seems to be leading many into a mistaken belief as to the classes on which the moral tone, and prospect of moral advancement, of every country with popular institutions must mainly be dependent.

I write with the full remembrance, and with the highest veneration, of those great men who have struggled upwards, from the humblest origin, to instruct and improve their fellow men. When God sends a great man, none but a fool would care what Nazareth he springs from. I have also personally known in the poorest, virtues that might stand as examples for every Christian's imitation. But, nevertheless, I deem that in human action, the pressure of temptation, and the counteracting efficacy of moral force—the desire of intellectual improvement, and the opportunity of satisfying that desire—are elements from which, though we cannot proceed with anything like an algebraic formula in individual cases, yet when masses are concerned we may safely predicate the general results. And with this view I deem that the classes to which some writers of the present day appear to look for the moral reformation, and moral tone of the country, do not seem to me those upon whom we may most probably repose that hope. I think that it is expecting the largest crop from the least favourable soils. This tendency has gone so far that, in an age eminently unpoetical, we have absolutely gone back to the most fanciful and farthest from reality of all the forms of poetry—the pastoral. For what else are the fictions in which not only the virtues attainable by all ranks, but the tone and habits resulting from mental delicacy and intellectual refinement are represented as the attributes of *quasi* Arcadians at the present day? All honour to the genius which raises images of holiness, and longings after greater purity and goodness, in all who dwell on its creations. All honour to those who deepen the sympathies between man and man, and enlarge the sphere of charity and benevolence. But not the less, in the days of chartist movements, and corn-law leagues, and repeal agitation, let us remember, that when large masses display this power and disposition to combine, and when in every direction united action seems getting more and more a national habit, it must be to the influence of the enlightened few over the uneducated many, to the power of Thought to give a right

course to Action, that we must look with the deepest interest for our reliance on national advancement.

Deeply impressed with these views, remembering how many of our more educated classes are brought up at the Universities, and how great is the influence of those trained at these institutions, both in the country in general, and more especially in Parliament, where nearly all the members of the House of Peers, and a large proportion of those of the House of Commons have been educated at College, I deem that it is difficult to over-estimate the importance of reforming whatever may impair the efficiency of these great institutions, and prevent their remaining stationary while all around is on the advance. I do not, however, propose on the present occasion to enter upon the whole question of English University education, but intend to limit myself to the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness on which they are at present based; and to considerations connected with the origin, and the tendencies, of the system of Religious Tests existing in those institutions; inquiring why, in the noble language of Bacon, while the civil state is purged and restored by good and wholesome laws "devising remedies as fast as time breedeth mischief, contrariwise the ecclesiastical state should still continue upon the dregs of time."

II.

As it was the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness—though based, as I shall presently show, on grounds far different from any now existing—that first closed the English Universities against all but those who held, or professed to hold, one particular form of faith: as it is the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness which now seeks to maintain the continuance of University Tests: as the same spirit of Religious Exclusiveness is constantly exhibited at the present day, always lowering in its tone, and always hostile to progress: as this spirit has especially clogged all former discussions on the question of education: as it is this which has to be feared as the obstacle most threatening to all who now desire the success of a comprehensive scheme of education: I trust that the following observations, which are especially applicable to the question of University Tests, may be found to have some interest in respect to other questions intimately connected with the moral welfare of the country.

What I desire to recall to remembrance is, that it is to no age, or sect, or party, or country that the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness is confined. Even at the present day it permeates the tone of our habitual thoughts, and exhibits itself in the form of our household words. See how, in considering

many events and characters in religious history, the opinions of men of different parties seem to be regulated upon the old Antinomian theory; those who are on our own side are regarded as in a state of grace, and whatever they do is right; while of those who are not in that state of grace, the most virtuous acts are only to be regarded as perverse and damnable. See how we Protestants, while justly execrating the persecutions of "bloody Mary," pass over with complacency the persecutions of "good Queen Bess;" see how the horrible cruelties and murders of Henry VIII. are overbalanced, in the popular mind, by the mere fact of his having introduced the Reformation, and he is almost a popular favourite with the title of "bluff King Hal;" see how those who detest the Catholic inquisition speak of Cranmer, who would have introduced a Protestant inquisition; see how Edward VI.'s persecution of his own sister, only restrained by Charles V.'s threat of war, his imprisonment of the Catholic bishops, the burning of Joan Boucher and of Von Parris, the forgiving those who recanted on their bearing faggots during a sermon at Paul's-cross, the enforcing conformity by imprisonment during the King's pleasure—all this seems to be outweighed by the one remembrance of his influence in support of the Reformation, and in popular estimation he still holds the place assigned to him by Coverdale's quaint eulogy, as "the high and chief admiral of the great navy of the Lord of Hosts, principal captain and governor of us all under him, the most noble ruler of his ship, even our most comfortable Noah, whom the eternal God hath chosen to be the bringer of us unto rest and quietness."

I assure my readers that any historical retrospect of mutual intolerance is to my mind, as it must be to every mind that dwells by preference on the better aspect of humanity, so full of painful and humiliating reflections, that I should recoil from the task of recalling them to remembrance, were it not for a strong hope that a consideration of the hideousness of the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness in other times, may do something towards promoting a spirit of forbearance in our own. What I desire to remind them of is, that this spirit has been confined to no party, or age, or country, that the Catholic, the Protestant, the Non-Conformist are all obvious to the same reproach, and that even those who had themselves been the victims of intolerance, became the persecutors of others as soon as in the changes of power it became their turn to be advanced to domination. Cranmer, notwithstanding his previous perils, was a persecutor of Gardiner, and his share in persevering to obtain the death warrant of Joan Boucher is

too well known to dwell upon. Ridley, Hooper, and Latimer all joined in the persecution of their opponents. In the next reign Bonner left the Marshalsea and Gardiner the Tower, to retaliate by a persecution more cruel than that of which they and others had been the victims. And again, on the accession of Elizabeth, the persecutors and the persecuted once more changed places, to show that sufferings which might have suggested the spirit of forbearance, had only issued in the desire of retaliation. Knox, who might himself have been a victim had the struggle for power terminated in favour of his opponents, spoke of the murder of the Archbishop of St. Andrew's as a "godly fact," and praised the Earl of Arran's proclamation, that idolaters should die the death, as a "stout and godly protestation." Luther, who on his return from the Wartburg drew his graphic sketch of the devil "seated behind the fire of hell, and folding his arms with malignant glance and horrid leer, saying how good it is in yonder madmen to play into my hands," when he saw men trying to propagate the gospel by violence, soon himself became the persecutor of Carlstadt, soon exclaimed of Zwingle, that either himself or the Swiss must be the minister of Satan—soon refused to allow that the Swiss reformers belonged to the Christian Church, and replied to those who spoke of unity among the Reformers—"Cursed be this concord, cursed be this charity, down, down with it to the bottomless pit of hell." The English Protestants who fled from the persecutions of Mary, were in some instances refused communion by the Protestants in Germany, some of whom even spoke of the English martyrs as "martyrs for the devil;" yet these very English exiles broke out into persecutions of each other, and one party managed to drive the other out of Frankfort; so that we can almost believe the assertion, that the very prisons became theatres of controversy. I must remind my readers that the Protestant conspiracy of Amboise against the French king and the Guises preceded the Catholic massacre of St. Bartholomew; and that the murder of the Duke de Guise by the Protestant Poltrot preceded the Catholic murder of Coligni. The latter act of retaliation is only surpassed by the fact that when Vitre assassinated the Marechal d'Ancre, James I., who had so narrowly escaped the fifth of November plot, desired a letter to be written, applauding Vitre for doing the King of France so good service, the writer of that letter being the Duke of Buckingham, who afterwards fell by the dagger of Felton.

I am not going to dwell upon the penal acts passed by the Protestant Parliaments of Elizabeth and James. The penalties of high treason, enforced with all their terrible details, till

popular aversion to the offence was known to be so merged in sympathy with the victim, that a mitigation was accorded by policy which had not been granted by compassion; the minor penalties of heavy fines and long imprisonments; the violation of the sanctity of home by domiciliary visits; the not only encouraging those who would denounce recusants, but obliging members of the House of Commons to declare what recusants they knew in their respective neighbourhoods, and enforcing heavy penalties on those who sheltered the proscribed; the proposal to attempt that bitterest injury, which the very brute creation will fight against at any odds, of taking away the children of Catholics, and have them educated as Protestants;—these acts, I shall show, have recently been spoken of by Sir Robert Inglis as trophies of a golden and Augustan age, the obsolete remnants of which it is even now unwise to repeal. For myself, I can only say that I never think of this chapter of our country's history without a wish that I could tear it from our records: it is, in Burke's burning language, "as black as black."

Then came the time when the despised and persecuted Puritan, in his turn advanced to domination, to show that the lesson of persecution which he had been taught "he would execute, and it should go hard but he would better the instruction." Then the Episcopalians, so lately exulting in the spiritual monopoly of the apostolical succession, and in the temporal monopoly enforced by the penal statutes, found themselves pushed from their stools by those who regarded them, in Burton's polite language, as "blind watchmen, dumb dogs, ravening wolves, antichristian mushrooms, robbers of souls, limbs of the beast, and the factors of antichrist." But even those who had so recently united to work out their exodus from one common bondage, soon became split into new sub-divisions of intolerance. The "new forcers of conscience," acted, as Milton said, as though they had "envied, not abhorred" the sins of those whom they had thrown off; and the Independents found, to their cost, that "New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large." Cromwell, again, who, when the Presbyterians were pressing on the Independents, said, "Every sect saith, 'Give me liberty,' but give it him and to his power, he will not yield it to any body else," soon in his turn exemplified the truth of his own remark—"Is there not yet upon the spirits of men a strange itch? Nothing will satisfy them unless they can press their finger upon their brethren's consciences, to pinch them there." The sequestered Episcopalian clergy were not only deprived of their former means of livelihood, and forbidden to use the church service

as ministers either in public or private, but were excluded from almost the only means of decent maintenance which their education left open to them, by being forbidden to teach, either as tutors or schoolmasters. The readers of Evelyn's memoirs will remember the trouble he got into for keeping Christmas-day, "contrary to an ordinance made, that none should any longer observe the superstitious time of the Nativity," and his being interrupted in his devotions by armed soldiers removing himself and his friends from the very communion-table, round which they were assembled to receive the sacrament according to the form of their own faith. And let those who justly execrate the persecutions in France and the Low Countries, and shudder at the thought of Pius the Fifth's injunction to take no Huguenot prisoner, but to kill all who fell into their hands, and his approving Alva's bloody measures, and sending him a consecrated hat and sword in token of his approbation—let such, I say, remember that the English Parliament issued an ordinance, that no quarter should be given to any Papist born in Ireland, or to any Irishman whatever, but that wherever they were taken they should forthwith be put to death; and that this ordinance, though partly checked by Rupert's retaliation, and partly by Fairfax's humanity, was nevertheless acted upon in cold blood in several instances both in the army and in the navy, where the Irish prisoners were tied back to back and thrown into the sea. And let them remember the massacres at Wexford and Drogheda, and then turn to the deeply interesting pages of Carlyle's Cromwell, to see how the superstitions even of hero-worship can so over-cloud the judgment as to make a charitable and reflecting mind excuse in Cromwell what it would execrate in Alva, and how far the one-sidedness of partizanship, which I have before alluded to, may bias the mind even of a philosopher in his "elucidations."

Again the tables turned at the Restoration, again to show how little of forbearance had been taught by suffering. The spirit of concession really seemed narrowed rather than enlarged; those who had but slight differences on points of doctrine, refused toleration to those who differed with them on points of discipline; the attempt at reconciliation through the Savoy conferences broke up on discussions relating to kneeling at the communion; and Baxter, whose charity went so far towards comprehension as to divide dissidents into "tolerables and intolerables," found himself included in the latter category, which he had himself reserved for Papists and Socinians. It seems pretty clear that a general scheme of toleration might have been brought about, could the Non-Confor-

mists have been reconciled to tolerating the Catholics; but I need hardly remind my readers that while Catholics were prevented from sitting in the House of Commons (both by the oath of supremacy enforced under Elizabeth, and those who would take that were excluded by the resolution of 1614, by which every member was obliged to receive the sacrament before he took his seat), in the House of Lords Catholic peers continued to sit until excluded by the Act of 1678, consequent upon the Popish plot. From this it ensued that laws against the Papists could only be obtained by acts which included all classes of Dissenters; and the Non-conformists who urged on the exclusion of the Papists, did so at the cost so admirably ridiculed in Hogarth's "Election," where the man who is seated at the end of a projecting beam, from which his opponent's portrait is suspended, is sawing away the other end of the beam, forgetting in his zeal that he must tumble himself when he achieves the downfall of his adversary. Then came the various acts, which are, to my mind, removed only one stage from the boot and the thumb-screw; the Corporation Act, the Act of Uniformity, the Conventicle Act, the Five Mile Act, and the Test Act. Then came the extraordinary frenzy on the Popish Plot, exhibiting a whole nation, generally remarkable for its love of fair play and humanity, eager to enforce the severest of penalties on the most ridiculous evidence; and so turning men from the usual course of their natures, as to make the mild Lord Russell endeavour to prevent the revolting tortures of death for high treason being commuted to beheading, in the case of Lord Stafford. Subsequently, on Lord Russell's own execution, the King, as is well known, remarked, "Lord Russell will now find that I have the power of commuting the punishment for high treason." Then followed fresh persecutions of the Catholics; power was even given to reward the prosecution of Papists out of the forfeitures of their property, being a stimulus to strain for convictions only second to the old law, which gave one-third of the property of heretics to the judge who condemned them. Then came the royal exercise of the dispensing power, which by suspending, through a royal proclamation, the execution of all the penal laws respecting religious offences, obtained a temporary toleration, but at the expense of a principle which, if admitted, would have virtually converted our mixed government into an absolute monarchy. But the relief from the immediate pressure of the penal laws outweighed, with many of the sectaries, the perils to the constitution which the measure involved; and addresses of thanks were presented from various religious bodies, including the

Quakers (who had suffered more than most of the Non-Conformists, in consequence of their still continuing frequently to assemble publicly, while others adopted the precaution of assembling in secret), whose joy at release from persecution was such that, according to Barillon, when the good brethren went to present their address of thanks, they even, accidentally, all took off their hats in Sunderland's ante-room, and forgot to take them up again when they were introduced, so that they presented their address uncovered, thus yielding to gratitude what they had refused to concede to fear, when submitting to be punished for contempt of court in not taking off their hats when placed upon their trial. But events soon showed that the policy which at first displayed itself in a general toleration of all religions, was to be carried out into the gradual but complete supremacy of the Papists, and the Revolution saved the country at the crisis of its peril; but even then was exhibited how narrow were the views of religious liberty entertained by those who would have risked all for civil freedom; fresh penalties were devised for the Roman Catholic, while the Non-Conformist, still lying under many of his previous disqualifications, found his ranks joined by some of the very churchmen under whose domineering spirit he had lately suffered, but whose consciences now obliged them to come forth and join the stigmatised Non-Jurors.

Is not this a mournful picture? The annals of Religious Exclusiveness would indeed present, if not the saddest, at least the most humiliating, of all the records of human action, were it not for the redeeming thought that the same page which chronicles the persecutions to which intolerance has had recourse, also attests the invincible firmness with which those persecutions have been endured. The records of the bigot's cruelty are also records of the unswerving resolution which has been inspired by faith. The rack, the faggot, the thumbscrew, the gibbet, so bitter to remember from the motives which instigated their employment, yet afford reflections of triumph when we recall the fortitude which has given men, aye and women too, the victory in their hour of trial. The laws which imposed death as the penalty for attending the field-conventicle, only sent the Covenanter armed to the assembly of his proscribed brethren. The enforcement of the penalties of evisceration from the living body did not deter the priest from leaving the security of his foreign asylum, to propagate what he believed to be the doctrine of the only true church. Thus may we draw no slight tribute to the goodness of our common nature, even from the records of intolerance, when we remember that the flames lighted by the persecutor's

cruelty shone also on the martyr's constancy. But with what a mournful foreknowledge of the sufferings with which the working out of his dispensation would be accompanied, must that sad prophecy, so amply fulfilled, have been uttered, "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, nay, but rather division."

If history be "philosophy teaching by examples," how often is it by examples of what we should avoid? I venture to hope that recalling to remembrance the history of past intolerance may do something towards abating the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness in our own day. It is true that the power of persecution is now wrested from the hand of the bigot; but of the spirit of bigotry how much remains? That a spirit of charity and forbearance is on the advance I firmly believe; but what repulsive ebullitions of bigotry still continually obtrude themselves. It may almost be feared that education has not so much destroyed the spirit of intolerance as altered the forms of its manifestation.

Look at the very Church itself, and see what intolerance is exhibited among the various parties into which it is at present divided. Look at the mutual intolerance of High Church and Low Church, names insulting and misleading in their very nature, and reminding us, from the manner in which they are often used, of Mrs. Glover's admirable arrogance as the lady of "*Upper* Phillimore-place," towards the lady of "*Lower* Phillimore-place." Half of this dispute would, I believe, be dissolved, if the party names were changed to their more proper designations of the "ultra" and the "moderate" church party.

But besides the bigotry of the ignorant, the narrow-minded, and the selfish, how much of this spirit have we to deplore, even among the educated and the benevolent! And the manifestations of intolerance are perhaps most to be regretted in the enlightened and kind-hearted, from the illusion of the reflected lustre of the amiable qualities that sometimes co-exist with bigotry. Two instances lie before me, exactly illustrating the peculiar form of intolerance, as existing at the present day, in otherwise enlightened and benevolent natures.

Just before the Easter recess Sir Robert Inglis, member, it must be remarked, for the University of Oxford, spoke in opposition to a bill brought in to repeal some of the barbarous old acts against the Catholics, now obsolete, the very existence of which was unknown, which had been unearthed by some legal antiquary, and which it was thought desirable to bring in an act to repeal; partly because their existence was a disgrace to the statute-book, and partly because, as in the in-

stance of the *qui tam* actions last year, there was a remote danger that personal feeling might call the obsolete law into mischievous activity. But Sir Robert Inglis, who on all such occasions speaks as the representative, I will not say of the bigotry of the United Kingdom, but of the strictest spirit of high-church exclusiveness, would not hear of the abrogation of these obsolete penalties. He appealed to the house "whether the statutes which the Catholic Bill proposed repealing were legislative provisions enacted in the 'dark ages' of English legislation? On the contrary, was he not justified in saying that many of these acts were passed in what was generally termed the golden and Augustan age of Queen Elizabeth, and in the reign of James I. and Charles II., when the destinies of the country were wielded by men conspicuous for their ability and for the soundness of their statesmanlike views?"—(Speech, 11th March).

Really the mechanism of a mind like this is to me an almost unsolvable mystery; I cannot understand how it works; but as a matter of fact there it is; there is an example of the refraction which, in an educated and most amiable mind, love to one's neighbour undergoes when passing through the medium of Religious Exclusiveness. The example is so pertinent to my present argument, that I must for a moment dwell upon it, if only to ask those who on such principles oppose the repeal of intolerant statutes, what they would think if such arguments were used to keep up intolerant statutes against themselves? What would they think if their turn came to have some obsolete law hunted up by bigotry, to be used in a persecution, of which they were the victims?

For instance, it is well known that the marriages of clergymen were legalized by an act of Parliament in Edward the Sixth's reign, which act was repealed in the reign of Queen Mary; and it is further known that Queen Elizabeth would never allow this latter act to be repealed. It is well known that she said that the clergy must be content if she connived at their marriages, for she never would sanction them. And what personal construction good Queen Bess herself put upon the state of the law is also notorious from her farewell speech to the wife of Parker, after she had been partaking of that archbishop's hospitality—"Madam (the term for a married woman), I may not call you; mistress (the term for an unmarried woman), I will not call you, therefore whatever you are I wish you a good morning." A pleasant memorial is this of that "golden and Augustan age." No doubt Parker, who had been Anne Boleyn's chaplain, thought that the "whatever you are" was equally applicable to a mother and

daughter who should be nameless, though of course he gave no hint of this to the heady Tudor, who entertained thoughts of "unfrocking" on much slighter provocation, and who would have thought of something much more serious for this.

Now, I put it to Sir Robert Inglis, and all who have joined him in this form of Religious Exclusiveness, what would they think, supposing any one were to try to invoke this obsolete statute of Queen Mary, and put Queen Elizabeth's construction of the law into hostile question against the married clergy of the Church of England? For myself, I shudder at the thought of the consternation which my speculative illustration may provoke. Here are a body of perhaps some nine thousand married clergy, making, with wives and widows, perhaps twenty thousand souls, with an average of perhaps four children to the beneficed clergy, and twice that number to the curates; what will all these people say to Sir Robert Inglis, if there should be an attempt to inconvenience them through his principle of obstructing the repeal of a law of obsolete intolerance? The magnitude of the prospective danger may well appal him. I already picture to myself the hopes that my hint may arouse in some minds, that a state of conjugal infelicity, which they have hitherto deemed irreparable, may not be so interminable as it has appeared. I even picture to myself the incumbent of some ample benefice suddenly seized with, I assure him useless scruples, taking leave of his disconsolate spouse with Queen Elizabeth's "Madam, I may not," &c., and seeking in vain upon his solitary couch that repose which never failed him when, with untroubled mind, he was in the companionship of his affectionate helpmate. I likewise picture to myself his humbler curate, equally conscientious with his rector, but less blest with spare bedrooms, making up his miserable bed on three chairs in his library, and listening with feverish restlessness to the nursery cries of those whose fate is so dear but so doubtful. Finally, I picture to myself that by my *tu quoque* I may have brought conviction of the more than absurdity of trying to retain laws of obsolete intolerance, because enacted in an age that challenges our admiration from widely different reasons; and I trust that my illustration may tend to abate one form of Religious Exclusiveness, and to answer one argument of the friends of University Tests.

The other illustration to which I refer is from Dr. Wordsworth's interesting little volume, entitled "Diary in France." And this illustration I the more readily adopt because, while the spirit which it embodies will be felt to be one that is continually obtruded in one shape or another, I shall not have the

pain of quoting any of those coarse ebullitions in which bigotry occasionally indulges, but shall merely effect my purpose of illustrating how at the present day the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness works in an amiable and educated mind, intent upon its high mission to promote spiritual welfare.

Dr. Wordsworth went, when in Paris, to visit a very interesting religious society, namely, the institution for *Diaconesses des Eglises Evangéliques de France*, as they term themselves, or *Sœurs de Charité Protestantes*. In this society there are no vows, but only simple engagements for not more than two years, which may be dissolved at any time by the governing body on sufficient reason being shown, and there is no seclusion of the sisterhood. "It is certain that the conductors of this establishment desire to make it a religious one; the walls are inscribed with numerous Scripture texts; there are Bibles in all the rooms of the sisters; and there is a chapel in the building where they assemble for prayer, singing psalms, reading and exposition of Scripture, morning and evening daily."

Such an establishment bears the promise of combining all the advantages of a religious order, without the drawback of any of its evils; tramelling by no vows that may result from transient fancy, or be taken under the influence of an enthusiasm that may cool and be regretted; not dedicated to a seclusion from at once the temptations and the virtues of active life, but framed for religious self-dedication as respects the devotee, joined to a life of charitable activity in respect to the exterior world; not binding the sisterhood by an irrevocable vow which leaves no alternative but the pursuit of religious exercises; but, from the freedom of the devotee, making their sacrifice an act of which the voluntariness is constantly renewed. Such an establishment seems calculated to awaken no feelings but those of interest and affectionate sympathy. But now see what the vision becomes when viewed through the medium of Religious Exclusiveness. There is in this society, according to Dr. Wordsworth, "a deplorable error—an unhappy want of *principle*—a defect which is at the root of the system." This is a sad announcement. What may the canker be that detracts from the well-being of a society framed for such holy purposes? Are there interior dissensions? No; all is peace. Is there any religious tyranny exercised over the inmates? Exactly the reverse appears. What, then, is this "unhappy want of principle?" Neither more nor less than that "This society claims, in the official prospectus of its constitution, to have no other basis than the Gospel (de ne pas avoir pour base que l'Evangile),"

and that it *unites in its constitution members of both Protestant communions, the Reformed and the Calvinistic,* "hence it has and can have, *no common creed,* and no *basis of unity.*"

Is not this lamentable? The fact that there is such a society; that people do unite for religious purposes without mutual repulsion from minor differences; that they do sink the minor points on which they differ for the sake of the important points on which they agree; is delightful in raising up the mind again from the effect of such exclusiveness as Dr. Wordsworth's; which, although in his case dictated, I am sure, by the purest zeal for what he believes to be truth, yet seems to go far towards only calling "religion" that which is sectarianism, and to stigmatize as sectarianism that which is religion. Is not uniformity of conviction on all the greatest points of Christianity sufficient for a "common creed?" Is not combining to promote the great cause of christian charity sufficient for a "basis of unity?" Not apparently to a mind, however pure, which sees everything through the medium of Religious Exclusiveness. "The chapel," says Dr. Wordsworth, "has a pulpit, but no altar." How could any man's mind, when viewing such an establishment, be occupied with such a form? How could any man who was conversant with the grounds of difference between Protestantism and Catholicism insist on such a form as this, the having no *altar* in a Protestant establishment existing in a Catholic community? But "narrow indeed is the way," according to the constructions of Religious Exclusiveness. "The daily expositions of holy scripture in the chapel are given by the *sœur supérieure,* or by one of the other *sœurs* deputed for the occasion;" and, continues Dr. Wordsworth, "it is difficult to see how the members of the Sisterhood can consistently with this assertion (de ne pas avoir pour base que l'Evangile) take upon themselves the title of *Diaconesses,* without any due mission; and how can they reconcile their profession of a scriptural foundation with their daily practice of expounding scripture, when they meet in the book which they expound with the prohibition which suffers them 'not to teach?'" * Really I think that this Sisterhood, though their title of deaconesses may not have had an archbishop's sanction, and though the religious exercises in which they unite are celebrated in a chapel without an altar, might have taught the canon of Westminster something which he now finds it "difficult to see;" and might have called to his mind what is the sacrifice that is to be offered when he advances to the altar in his own minster,

* Diary in France, pp. 172, 173.

glittering with its massive gold, and backed by the exquisite tracery of Henry the Seventh's chapel, but I am sure, to his pure mind, most impressive and most attractive from the sacred tablets which it upholds.

Let me present, in contrast to this spirit of exclusiveness, the fine passage in which Farel implored forbearance, which is quoted from a Neufchatel manuscript by D'Aubigné, in his recently published volume. "Let there not be in Christ's body either fingers, or hands, or feet, or eyes, or ears, or arms, existing separately, and working each for itself, but let there be only one heart that nothing can divide. Let not variety in secondary things divide into many separate members that vital principle which is one and simple. Alas, the pastures of the church are trodden under foot, and its waters are troubled. Let us set our minds to concord and peace. When the Lord shall have opened heaven, there will not be so many disputes about bread and water. A fervent charity—that is the powerful battering-ram with which we shall beat down those proud walls, those material elements, with which men would confine us."—IV. 360.

I have written at greater length than I had expected on the general question of Religious Exclusiveness, but I have only presented a very small proportion of the deeply interesting historical recollections that crowd upon my memory on thinking over the mournful records, and in reflecting on the perplexing problem, of religious intolerance. But the subject is of such deep interest, both in its immediate bearing on the question of Tests at the Universities, and on many other of the most important questions that have recently engaged, and inevitably must continue to engage, the earnest and anxious attention of all who desire to promote, in whatever field, the spiritual advancement of their countrymen; that I cannot regret that I have led my readers to dwell on recollections that must assuredly serve as beacons to warn us what to shun, if ever wisdom can be gained by the remembrance of the misguided courses into which, under the influence of the same impulses, men have been heretofore betrayed.

III.

We now come to the bearings of this principle of Religious Exclusiveness, in creating and in maintaining Religious Tests at the English Universities. And I must first beg my readers' particular attention to the very important fact, that the causes which led to the introduction of Religious Tests at the Universities were wholly peculiar to the exigencies of the time when

they were imposed, which exigencies have now completely and for ever ceased to exist. Therefore all that Sir Robert Inglis, or any one else, may say respecting the wisdom of our ancestors, the trophies of an Augustan age, and so forth—whatever such an argument may be worth in any case, is, at all events, utterly beside the purpose on the present occasion; as it by no means follows that even the same men would have been the advocates of exclusiveness under circumstances so entirely different.

For what were the circumstances under which exclusion on account of religious opinions was introduced at the Universities? It was no part of the original constitution of those bodies. Had it been so, the Christian student who frequented the Mahommedan schools in Spain might have learned there a lesson of charity, of far more importance than all else he would acquire from the superstructure raised by Arab intelligence on the basis of Grecian wisdom. I remark this, because those who can see nothing but what is exactly as it should be in things as they are in the English demand of subscription to the Articles, may perhaps be struck by the absurdity of the thing, if the Christian student resorting to the Arab university had been forced to submit to circumcision as an indispensable preliminary to his course of instruction. But the eager student, whose enthusiasm carried him through the perils of travel, to acquire a learning which exposed him to the dangers of suspected magic when he had attained it, escaped a compliance with what after all would have been less painful and less humiliating than many have found their conformity with the terms of the English subscription.

What, then, were the circumstances under which the imposition of Religious Tests was introduced at the English Universities? Neither more nor less than that they were a part of a series of Religious Tests enforced at a time when the whole question of the legitimacy of the sovereign, the change of the dynasty, and the determination of which of two great antagonist parties should possess exclusive authority in the country, all depended on the one point of what form of religion should hold supremacy in the kingdom. If Mary was legitimate, then Elizabeth was not, and *vice versâ* except so far as Act of Parliament made them so. We who are living under the security of a settled constitution and an undoubted succession, can hardly realize the utter insecurity and constant risk of revolution, under which men high in political life then existed. Although the act of Henry VII. promised immunity to all who yielded obedience to the *de facto* possessor of the crown, yet was not only all court favour, at a time when that

meant much more than it now does, distributed according as one religion or the other obtained supremacy, but each party was in succession subjected to the chances of arbitrary imprisonment, bills of attainder, and that feeling of being watched and suspected, which led those who had more hope than fear into desperate courses, terminating in imprisonment, exile, or the block. Think of the two Seymours, of the Earl of Arundel, the Duke of Norfolk, the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, and many others; remember that Mary's own servants had nearly all been sent to the Tower by Edward; and remember that Elizabeth had herself been sent to the Tower on account of Wyatt's rebellion: when, notwithstanding all her courage, she sat down on a stone and burst into tears, as she set foot in that gloomy fortress; and well she might, for she was sitting within a stone's throw of where her mother's head had fallen.

That the disabilities and penalties enacted on the grounds of religious belief were introduced on account of their political bearings, is shown by the fact that the punishments denounced were not for the crime of *heresy*, but for that of *high treason*. Both Bacon and Burleigh asserted that the victims of persecution were not proceeded against as heretics, but as traitors. The penalties for heresy were still in existence, and were enforced by Elizabeth; the last instance in which burning for heresy was resorted to being, I believe, in 1589. And, however we may execrate the cruel persecutions under Elizabeth, we must admit that precautionary measures of some sort were demanded by the principle of self-preservation, when large masses held a faith that gave her crown to another—when a Felton could be found to affix the Pope's bull, deposing Elizabeth, to the Bishop of London's palace, and when conspirators both at home and abroad were constantly plotting how they might make Elizabeth and the Queen of Scots change places as monarch and prisoner. The political aspect in which religious matters were considered in those times is strongly evinced, in my opinion, by the extraordinary fact, that the *first* Parliament of Mary, in its first session, overturned the religion which she found established by her predecessor—while, again, the *first* Parliament of Elizabeth, in its first session, overturned the religion established by Mary. Notwithstanding the monstrous power then exercised by the Crown, both in creating new boroughs and in influencing elections through the sheriffs, yet as the representative principle was still in action, it seems to me that this complete change can only be explained by the supposition that each party admitted that the choice

of their religion was included in their choice of a sovereign, and that the latter being decided, the other followed as a matter of course. This is further shown by the curious fact, that very few persons of eminent rank, excepting the prelates, became martyrs even under Mary's persecutions; they appear to have conformed, regarding, as I have stated, their religion as included in their allegiance.

The manner in which politicians then considered religious changes is strikingly evinced by the deep anxieties respecting the succession, which even Elizabeth's imperious temper, and special jealousy on this particular topic, could not restrain the Parliament from exhibiting; feeling, as they did, that either power or proscription awaited one party or the other, according as that question might be determined in the early part of her reign, when her severe illness made it probable that the subject might be of the most immediate importance. And here I must remark what I believe has not before been observed, though those conversant with the history of that period will see what a curious field of speculation it opens, that had Lady Jane Grey, instead of being pushed forward when she was, by the ambitious men in whose hands she was a puppet, remained in retirement during the reign of Mary, it is quite possible, and I think highly probable, that she would have succeeded to the Crown upon the death of Elizabeth, and her issue might now be upon the throne of England. For during the early part of Elizabeth's reign, the succession, in the event of the Queen's death, must have either gone to the Protestant Greys or to the Catholic Mary of Scotland. We know that the Commons were most bitter against the Scottish line, both in their address in 1563, and again in 1572, when they introduced a bill to exclude the Queen of Scots from the succession. Therefore, had Lady Jane Grey been then alive, it is probable that her accomplishments might have made her the centre of the hopes of the Protestant party, who, until the education of James as a Protestant, had to look to the loss of all power under the Catholic Mary of Scotland, or to place their hopes on Lady Jane's sisters, in spite of the doubtful marriage of one and the mean marriage of the other.

Thus, I repeat, Religious Tests were introduced at the Universities at a time when religious belief was intimately connected with the question of allegiance; and, therefore, no argument will for a moment stand, at the present day, that is based upon a continuance of such restrictions from reference to the wisdom of statesmen in those days; since the circumstances of the present day have no similitude whatever to

those which caused these enactments to be framed. And I must beg particular attention to the fact that those who framed these religious restrictions for the universities, also carried out their principles into every sort of education. By the 5th Elizabeth, c. 1, the oath of supremacy was to be tendered to schoolmasters and private tutors; whose refusal to take the oath exposed them to the penalties of forfeiture and perpetual imprisonment. By a subsequent act, every person employing a tutor, or schoolmaster, who had not been approved by the ordinary, was to be fined £10 a month. And afterwards all English students, who were at foreign seminaries, were ordered to return within six months, under penalty of being punished as traitors; and all children afterwards sent were declared to be incapable of inheriting. Subsequently, in 1621, the Commons presented the petition, to which I have before alluded, praying that the King would order the children of all Catholics to be taken from their parents and educated as Protestants.

Thus, those who introduced Religious Tests at the Universities did so with the thorough intention to put down Catholicism root and branch; and carried out their views of a forced proselytism by the above-cited dispositions respecting all ages of the "rising generation." Thus, Religious Tests respecting education shared the fate of the other intolerant statutes to which I have already alluded. First enacted on political grounds, and receiving some colour of justice from that consideration, they obtained their worst use, as instruments of persecution, from the intolerant nature of the people, as exhibited by their special organ the House of Commons. Deeply indebted as this kingdom is to that Puritan element which did so much in working out our common liberties, it must be owned, by every one who will look below the surface of history, that to the same element is to be attributed much that is most painful to remember in the records of spiritual intolerance. The student in history need hardly be reminded how constantly the House of Commons were petitioning for the enforcement of the penal statutes, complaining of their being relaxed, even appointing a committee to inquire why a judge had not condemned certain recusants: that when the government would have adopted a mild course, the Parliament demanded a rigorous one; when James I., on the proposed marriage of Charles with the Infanta, and when Charles, on his subsequent marriage with Henrietta Maria, promised mitigation in the acts regarding the Catholics, the Commons still insisted on the enforcement of the penal statutes; and their journals are stained by the records of the

detestable pertinacity with which they persevered in demanding even the blood of their victims.

Therefore it is not surprising that the system of Religious Tests respecting education found, under the Parliament and Commonwealth, no other alteration than that the parties who were excluded by them were no longer the same. As I have already noticed, the Episcopalian clergy were now forbidden to teach as tutors or schoolmasters, as the Catholic priests had been before. At the Universities subscription to the Covenant superseded the Thirty-nine Articles; and the seat so recently held by Laud was filled by Cromwell as Chancellor of Oxford.

Again, the religious qualifications at the Universities were changed at the Restoration. Charles, who, when a fugitive, had authorised Ormond to induce the Irish Catholics to rise for him by offers of toleration, soon after agreed with the Scotch to assist him by promises not to tolerate the Papists, promises so different from his recent engagements, that Ormond pronounced the document a forgery. He had "a king's oath to the contrary;" but, alas! that king was Charles the Second, who forthwith went to Scotland, signed a declaration of his father's backslidings and his mother's idolatry, got down to Worcester, and kept his life through the Papist Penderels and the recusant Whitgrave, only to come back to enforce fresh penalties against the Papists, and drive the Scotch Covenanters into rebellion by the oppression of the penal laws. The Universities resumed their old restrictions, and restored their ejected fellows; and tutors and schoolmasters, whose ranks had so recently been cleared of Episcopalians, were now obliged to renounce the Covenant. One might laugh at this masquerade of opinions, were it not that thoughts which quell all laughter obtrude themselves; but the patchwork of contradictory opinions is typified in the absurd dress in which men chose then to be represented in their pictures and statues; with the flowing wig of the modern courtier appearing on the head, while the rest of the figure was that of a Roman general; eyes with the leer of one of De Grammont's heroes peering above the garb of the continent Scipio; and men paying with the gold of their French bribes for being sculptured in the guise of Camillus.

Again, at the Revolution the inevitable affection of the Papists for James was a justification for William's adopting some measures of exclusion towards the Roman Catholics, as it was clearly impossible to entrust power to men by whom it would probably be employed against the very Sovereign who conferred it. Fresh penalties were accordingly devised against

the Catholics, and the importance attached to the subject of education was again shown by penalties against Papists for acting as tutors or schoolmasters. But here, again, the measures which were adopted displayed the spirit to which I have alluded; showing how the precautions which policy rendered necessary were exaggerated into persecution by the intolerant dispositions of those who framed them, and reminding us that the preserver of our civil liberty came from a country which had hardly fought out its independence from Papist intolerance before it entered upon the cruelties of the Arminian persecution.

IV.

Having in the previous sections recalled to the attention of my readers the varied manifestations under which the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness has exhibited itself in this country; having drawn their attention to the circumstances under which the system of Religious Tests was introduced at the Universities; having shown how utterly different were the circumstances under which those Tests were originally introduced from any now existing, so that no argument can stand which merely appeals to the wisdom of those who framed these Tests; I now come to the consideration of any arguments that can be adduced for or against retaining Tests respecting religious belief as a preliminary qualification, either to education, or to honours and emoluments, at the English Universities.

And I assure my readers that here my greatest, and, indeed, only difficulty consists in gaining any distinct idea of any reason, or even argument, why these Tests should be retained after the circumstances which led to their imposition have for ever disappeared; after other disabilities on religious grounds, enacted at the same time, and dependent on the same circumstances, have been repealed by the Legislature; leaving these Tests at the Universities the solitary representatives, as far as the state is concerned, of a spirit of Religious Exclusiveness for which all justification has ceased to exist.

The first argument, if such it can be called, which is to be noticed, is the old objection, not badly named by Bentham the "Chinese argument," that it is better to leave things as they are; that some good results are obtained, and it is undesirable to make any change; wise references to the epitaph, "I was well—I desired to be better—here I lie," and so forth. The day for this sort of argument, not so very long since rampant with all the impudence of an absurdity backed by authority, is so completely gone by in the world in general, that I would not stop to notice it, did I not believe that there

are sheltered nooks in the corners of cloisters, where a stagnant atmosphere lurks that would be swept away by the free breath of opinion elsewhere circulating; and that in the retirement of college quadrangles, men occasionally frame their actions from visions of the ghost of some defunct hypothesis. Therefore, I must just briefly notice, in passing, that the principle of maintaining an academic system which as a whole produces some good, in preference to a system that would produce a much greater amount of good, as far as it goes for anything, would equally maintain the clepsydra against the clock, the horse-mill against the steam-engine, the distaff against the spinning-jenny, the broad-wheeled waggon against the rail-road, the horn-lanthorn against the gas-lamp, and everything else that is slow, dim, superannuated, and obsolete, against the improvements made by skill, and the discoveries made by science. Moreover, I must remark that this line of argument has been exploded on a very similar occasion, when just the same sort of appeal was made to authority in favour of the old system that "worked so well," and when, indeed, the argument—as an argument—was worth exactly as much as it is now; I mean, when the Roman Senate petitioned Theodosius to restore Paganism, urging, in the words unintentionally plagiarised by the reasoners I refer to—"We ask again for that state of religion which long benefitted the Republic."

The next argument I have to notice is one which, in my opinion, is almost as worthless as that which I have just mentioned; but it is one which is apparently relied upon as a stronghold by the friends of Religious Exclusiveness, and is especially advocated by Sir Robert Inglis. It consists of some sort of doubt, arising from I cannot exactly discover what grounds, and taking I cannot clearly learn what sort of shape, as to the right of interfering with the laws which at present disqualify all who do not hold one particular form of religious belief from education at one, and from honours and emoluments at both the Universities. Sir Robert Inglis was pleased to say, when this question was last before the house, that "he was prepared to deny, and always would, whatever might be the fashion, that the colleges derived their origin in Catholic times, and were founded for their benefit." [I quote from the *Times* of the 11th of April, 1845.] I wish that Sir Robert Inglis had given us a few reasons, if he could find any, for holding such an opinion, instead of merely stating it in this "affable archangel" kind of way. I should like to know, for example, what he thinks of Chicheley, the founder of All-Souls, one of the bitterest persecutors of the Lollards, whom

he ordered his clergy to hunt up regularly twice a year. Sir Robert Inglis went on to say that "he would not state the number of names of those who had founded colleges before the Reformation, and of those who had founded them since, but would proceed to state the number of fellowships founded in those two periods, which was a point more interesting." Really, whatever we may say of his "affability," the "archangel" seems a little in abeyance in treating a historical fact in this manner; passing over the enormous disproportion of the colleges founded by Catholics, and finding the fellowships, where a greater equality in number exists, "more interesting." Sir R. Inglis said "he should deny the right of restitution, or the obligation of restitution." Here again he gives no reason for his opinion, which, therefore, stands on the same personal footing as Falstaff's hatred of "paying back;" unless it be connected with his subsequent question, "could it be contended in private or in public life that because we had given we had a right to resume?"

I have no doubt whatever that Sir Robert Inglis was perfectly serious and perfectly sincere in making this remark; but I hold this belief because he seems, from another observation, to be utterly ignorant of the history of the body which he represents. For I cannot believe that he would otherwise have made the extraordinary statement which I shall presently quote; though the above example of keeping back the number of colleges, while stating the number of fellowships, shows the bias to which the most amiable minds are liable when swayed by the spirit of Religious Exclusiveness. The observation to which I refer is his hint that "an endeavour had been made by the Crown, in a memorable period of the history of England, to interfere with both the Universities, and he hoped that no one would desire to re-introduce such a precedent as that." This reference to the conduct of James II. shows us that Sir Robert Inglis is utterly ignorant of the manner in which the Universities were forced to become Protestant under Elizabeth; for would he have thought of insisting, not on the illegal conduct, but on the interference at all, of James with respect to the Universities, if he had known how the Crown had interfered in a vast number of other instances, and had remembered that at least fifteen heads of colleges were deprived on the accession of Elizabeth, when Protestantism superseded Catholicism as the religion of the state? What is the meaning of Sir Robert Inglis's "giving" and "resuming?" Which of all the changes which the Universities have undergone does he call "giving," and which "resuming?" Here is a property of which a large proportion once was placed under the

control of the Catholics; which was taken from the Catholics and placed under the control of the Protestants; which, under Mary, was taken from the Protestants and given back to the Catholics; which, under Elizabeth, was taken from the Catholics and given back to the Protestants; which, under Cromwell, was taken from the Episcopalians and given to the subscribers to the Covenant; which, under Charles II., was taken from the subscribers to the Covenant and given back to the Episcopalians. Which of all these changes is "giving" and which "resuming?" May I not fairly add, that unless the first *taking away* from the Catholics can be called a *giving*, the property, according to Sir Robert Inglis, can never have passed from the Catholics, and that the only title of the present holders is that resulting from its being "resumed" at the Restoration, after being diverted during the Commonwealth. Sir Robert Inglis, and all who take this line of argument, remind me of the caricature which the old Duchess of Marlborough circulated in one of her election squabbles, in which she ridiculed her opponent under the guise of an elephant dancing on a tight-rope—so utterly incompatible does their basis seem with that which they desire to place upon it, so perilous, inconsistent, and ludicrous is the position of their superstructure. The matter is only made worse by reference to the Protestant endowments; for this line of argument recognises the claims of a founder's intention, at the very moment of keeping the hands closed on the Catholic foundations. I think it must be clear to my readers, on considering all the changes which this property has undergone, that the question resolves itself into the dilemma of the existence, or the non-existence, of a right to declare what Religious Tests shall affect the control of this property. In the event of the existence of such a right, the proposition for which I contend is admitted; in the event of its non-existence, then the property in the Catholic foundations has never passed from the Catholics. Therefore, I think I may take leave of the argument as to their being no right to control the disposition of this property in the words of honest Launcelot,—"When I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother, therefore be of good cheer, for truly I think you are damned."

The next point for consideration is a claim which I have never yet seen reduced to any distinct proposition, of the Church of England to possess some sort of authority over the Universities. I have heard it stated that the Universities "belong to the church of England," that the church of England "has a right to control University education." I am most anxious to make as clear a statement as I can of what

this claim may amount to; and am particularly desirous neither to understate the claim, so as to appear to leave its force unanswered, nor to exaggerate the claim lest my representation approach a caricature. In the difficulty of obtaining any other tangible shape of this proposition, and in my anxiety not to misrepresent the argument, I will take it as stated by Dr. Wordsworth in his more general observations on the rights of the clergy respecting education. Dr. Wordsworth says:—"It has since occurred to me....whether there can be such a thing as education without religion, and whether the clergy are at liberty to renounce the public exercise, and to suppress the assertion of the divine commission given by the Divine head of the church to every pastor, and especially to every bishop of the church, in the words as universally understood by Christian antiquity, "Pasce oves Meas," and "Pasce agnos Meos," "Euntes docete omnes gentes;" whether, I say, they can do this and be guiltless, and whether, after all, the question for them is not the liberty but the obligation of public instruction; whether they are not justly chargeable with a serious dereliction of duty in speaking of the *liberté d'enseignement*, instead of the *droit* and the *devoir d'enseignement*." *

Now, let it be clearly understood that not only in the propriety, but in the necessity, of religion forming a part—and a most prominent part—of education, I concur so cordially, that I am quite willing to go to the full extent of Dr. Wordsworth's proposition, that it is wrong even to call that an education from which religion is excluded. But I believe that this proposition is so nearly universally admitted in this kingdom that it is unnecessary to occupy time by insisting on it. I have fully in my memory the manner in which the cry of a "godless education" was raised respecting the Irish Colleges Bill, when, as usual, those who were feeblest in argument were loudest in their echo of a nickname. I also remember how, with widely different feelings, Dr. Arnold protested against the absence of religious instruction as part of the collegiate system of the London University. But without diverging into that question, I would merely remark that in these instances to argue that the parties in question did not deem that religion was an absolutely indispensable part of education, is just as absurd as to argue that the students had never been taught to eat or sleep, merely because they were not obliged to dine and lodge within the college walls.

I therefore fully agree with Dr. Wordsworth, that it is even a misnomer to term that an education from which religion is excluded. I also fully agree with him that it is the

* Diary in France, p. 101.

bounden duty of the clergy to instruct, and that this duty they cannot refrain from fulfilling without a dereliction of their sacred calling. I will add, more than this, that most admirably in a vast number of instances do the clergy at the present day fulfil this duty: fulfil it in their own personal expositions; fulfil it in insisting on the precepts of their Master; fulfil it in the instruction afforded by their own pure and exemplary lives. But here I stop. Where Dr. Wordsworth has found that any special authority was given to "bishops" to instruct; where he finds greater authority given to the Episcopalian prelate or pastor than to the Presbyterian or any other Christian pastor, I may well be at a loss to determine. And I believe that the bishops themselves would be the last persons to thank him for the discovery, if it were to be held valid, not in respect to any former merits as college tutors, but to a positive duty to come forward now that they are bishops, and exchange their dignified leisure for the turmoils and perplexities of educational discipline.

I have taken Dr. Wordsworth's statement of the proposition the more readily because I believe it to be a fair and full exposition and epitome of the sort of reasoning current upon this question. He is perfectly sincere and well intentioned, and he is also perfectly vague and indefinite. He sets up the indisputable duty of the clergy to instruct, and he carries this out into some sort of claim upon secular education: he quotes the general directions of the Gospel precept, and he interprets this into an episcopalian monopoly. He endeavours to support his faulty logic by a strained construction of a simple text, in the manner so admirably characterized by Cromwell, when using to the General Assembly words so strangely applicable to himself. "You have censured others and established yourselves upon the Word of God.....yet the Word of God may be to some a word of judgment that they may fall backward and be broken, and be snared, and be taken. There may be a spiritual fulness which the world may call drunkenness, as in the second chapter of the Acts. *There may be, as well, a carnal confidence upon misunderstood and misapplied precepts which may be called spiritual drunkenness.*" *

In order rightly to understand what claims may with propriety be advanced by the Church of England in respect to education, I must now recall to my reader's attention what the Church of England really is. And in doing this let it not be for a moment supposed that, in abating what I consider the undue pretensions of the establishment, I am forgetful of the amount of good of which it is the organ; let it not be for a moment supposed, that in attempting to dissolve the extra-

* Carlyle's Cromwell, II. 20.

vagant claims of a few, I am unmindful of the high education and active benevolence of the vast body of its pastors.

But neither these merits, nor any spiritual claims whatever, give to this Church its position as a National Establishment. The Church of England is the Church of England neither more nor less than because England has made it her Church. Granting to the Church of England all the spiritual claims that its most zealous partizans can advance—granting it to be the true Catholic church, the genuine depository of the exclusive gifts of the apostolical succession, the undoubted representative of the pure primitive church—all these claims, if admitted in their fullest extent, do not make this church the Church of England. All these claims would be of exactly the same value as they are now if this church had never even been heard of in this country, but were existing only in Abyssinia, or in Kamschatka. All these claims were of exactly the same value as they now are when this church ceased to be the Church of England under Mary, and again when it ceased to be the Church of England under the Commonwealth. All these claims are of exactly the same value south of the Tweed, where this church is the established religion of the state, and north of the Tweed, where it is only one of the forms of dissent. It is from no intrinsic claims that the Church of England holds its position as a National Establishment, but neither more nor less than from the expressed will of the Legislature, and to the extent and with the limits prescribed by the Legislature.

Those who hold an opinion different from this must do so in utter ignorance as to how the Protestant religion, under any form, ever became the established religion in this country at all. I am not now speaking of any probabilities as to the manner in which Providence might have worked out a purer faith here than obtains in some other countries; nor can I pause to speculate how far the more prevailing energy of the popular principle in this country must have secured success to what has in most countries been at one time or other the people's cause. But, speaking historically, I am stating as a matter of fact, how the present Church of England became the established religion of this country. And in stating the manner in which it has taken its special form and shape according to the circumstances of state policy and interference, I am only stating that it has shared the fate which Christianity has undergone in every country and every age. The truth of Christianity has forced its establishment in spite of hostile opposition, in a manner for which nothing but its Divine origin can possibly account; but the special form under which the germ has been developed has been, and must

inevitably be, the result of the various circumstances of external pressure. Nothing less than a series of miracles, instead of the action of general laws, could have made it otherwise. Therefore I am not surprised at what may strike some as a novelty, in the fact that the Reformation itself owed its success, under God, in many instances, to the manner in which it was protected by the state; and that we see, in many instances, the same popular desire for Reform successful or unsuccessful, even in different circles of the same Empire, and in different cantons of the same Confederacy, according as the ruling powers fostered or opposed the Reformation. Of course there are exceptions to this, of which Holland forms the most remarkable example. I beg my readers to mark the curious fact, that if the Arian portions of the Germanic races had been able to oppose a successful resistance to the invaders who leagued themselves with the Romish hierarchy, how different might have been the course of mediæval ecclesiastical history. I further beg them to observe how different might have been our own early religious history, if the Saxons, instead of subduing, had been forced to evacuate the country; leaving a different form of Christianity to proceed either from the British Christians in the west, or from St. Cuthbert and the Iona missionaries from the north. For I hope that I need hardly remind any of my readers that those who desired to decorate our new Houses of Parliament with pictures of "St. Augustine introducing Christianity into England," might just as well give us a cartoon representing the Duke of Wellington inventing gunpowder. Next, I must remind my readers that whereas, excepting so far as Wyatt's rebellion had a religious character, there was no popular demonstration of any moment in favour of the Reformation in England until the time of Elizabeth; yet there were insurrections of considerable moment, in which the populace shewed strong attachment to the old religion, and that one of these rebellions, in the reign of Edward VI., was put down, not even by the English forces at the disposal of the government, but by the aid of Italian and German mercenaries, under the orders of Lord Grey, the Marquess of Northampton, and the Earl of Warwick. We cannot of course tell how the victory might have gone without these mercenaries; but there is obviously, at any rate, the possibility that the Reformation might have been quenched in England, if it had not been supported by the swords of foreigners.

When, on Mary's accession, the Parliament repealed the acts enforcing the use of the reformed liturgy, which had been in Edward's time declared to have been framed with the

assistance of the Holy Ghost, but which was now pronounced "a new thing imagined and devised by a few of singular opinions," the Roman Catholic religion again became the religion of the state: it was the Church of England. And when, on the accession of Elizabeth, the Protestant religion again became the religion of the state, it was not by the assistance of the clergy, but in spite of the clergy; not with the assistance of the Convocation, but in spite of the Convocation; not by the assistance of the spiritual peers, but in spite of the spiritual peers, that it became the Church of England as by law established: and deprivation, fines, and imprisonments awaited bishops, heads of colleges, and other dignitaries, for holding what had been the tenets of the Church of England only a short time before.

That the Church of England became established in its Protestant form under Elizabeth by the direct action of the Legislature, in taking power from the holders of one set of opinions, and transferring it to the holders of another set of opinions, as completely as if Parliament were to take all power from the Episcopalians to-day and transfer it to the Wesleyans to-morrow, is to me such an incontrovertible historical fact, that I cannot but think that those who assert the high church claims to independent self-government must surely do so in ignorance of the origin through which they have any claims to government at all. Their opinions seem to arise from some indistinct view of what has been the amount of deference paid at various periods by Parliament to the Convocation. That the weight attached to the opinions of the clergy has been widely different at different periods, must be obvious to the most superficial reader of our country's history. Take for example the Parliament of 1455, when, I believe, the relative numbers of the spiritual and temporal peers assembled were thirty-three spiritual and twenty-seven temporal. Compare with this the choleric Tudor's, "By God I will unfrock you," and see how different must have been the weight attached to any assembly of the clergy at these two periods. And it is fortunate that the Reformation occurred at a time when the relative positions of the clergy and the state were in favour of the predominance of the latter; for had the Church then received that deference to its authority which was demanded for it as loudly then as now, the issue would, at any rate, have been considerably postponed. Look at the conduct of Henry VIII. with respect to the Convocation. Look at the enforcement of the ritual of Edward VI. by the Parliament. Look at the re-establishment of Protestantism under Elizabeth, in spite of the declaration presented to the Lords by the Convo-

cation, asserting their belief in the mass, the real presence, and the Pope's supremacy; and protesting that to decide on doctrines and discipline belonged to the Church, and not to any lay assembly. And when the Thirty-nine Articles had been framed by the Convocation, Parliament, in adopting the Articles, rejected the penal clauses, proposed at the same time by the Convocation.

Thus, I repeat, the Church of England became the Church of England because England made it her Church. It owes its position as an establishment to the will of the Legislature, and possesses power so far, and so far only, as the Legislature has given it efficacy. Let us then, proceed to see what that power amounts to with respect to the Universities. And at the first glance it is quite clear that, whatever the relation of the Church and the Universities may be, it does not consist in any power whatever on the part of the Church to interfere with the Universities, either in controlling their funds, or in directing their studies, or in regulating their discipline. If Convocation were to be re-organised for active purposes, and were induced to propose any alterations in the Universities, the latter need pay no more attention to such interference than to a mandate from the Great Mogul. And, on the other hand, if the bishops, instead of enforcing, as a general rule, education at the Universities as a prerequisite to ordination, were to rescind this rule; or, supposing that they even chose to declare that they would not ordain any one who had been educated at the Universities, the Universities would have no more power of doing away with this disqualification on the part of the Church than they would of appointing to a vacant bishopric.

So that the relation of the Church of England to the English Universities amounts, after all, to neither more nor less than this, that the Church has no power or authority of any sort whatever to control those institutions; that if the Church were to order that subscription to the Articles should take place on matriculation at Cambridge, or that it should not take place on matriculation at Oxford, there would be no more attention paid to this, or any similar interference, than if the Bishop of London were to order out the Horse Guards. All the connection that exists between the Church, as a Church, and the Universities, as Universities, consists in this—that the subscription to certain Religious Tests, which the Church has no power to alter, is enforced by certain parties whom the Church has no power to control. If any one with this clear in his mind chooses to say that the Universities belong to the Church, or to hold any proposition at all analogous to this, I

have no objection to his doing so, provided he does it with the clear understanding that formerly, when Religious Tests were imposed on the holders of civil and military offices, these offices might just as well have been said to belong to the Church, when all appointments to them were made by the Crown, as the Universities may be said to belong to the Church at the present day. It is clear that in either case it can only be by a great perversion of language that a party can be said to have any property, or any jurisdiction, in respect to things which he has not the slightest power either to enjoy or to control.

V.

Having now, as I trust, done something towards mitigating that spirit of Religious Exclusiveness which has hitherto been the constant antagonist of every Reform that involved comprehension, or even forbearance, in matters of religion; having pointed out how religious bigotry has been connected with Tests at the Universities; having shown how exclusion, which was justified, when instituted, by policy, has been continued since all necessity has ceased to exist, by intolerance; having examined the grounds of any claims arising from rights of property; and having shown what is the value of any pretensions on the part of the Church of England, with respect to the Universities; I proceed to consider what is the intrinsic reasonableness of continuing or of rescinding Religious Tests at the Universities.

And first, let it be distinctly understood that with respect to subscription to Articles as a qualification for being a clergyman of the Establishment, I have here nothing whatever to do. I freely admit, and not only the members of the Establishment, but Dissenters themselves, must agree, that if there is to be a state establishment for religion at all, that establishment must take some definite shape; and that agreement with its articles on the part of its clergy is concluded in the question of its establishment at all.

Therefore, if the Universities were exclusively places for theological studies preparatory to entering the Church, like the French Seminaries, I should decline all interference as to whether they did or did not enforce subscriptions to articles even preliminary to the studies on which the truth of those articles is based. But as theology is only one of the faculties at the Universities; and as only a small proportion of those who study or graduate are intended for the Church; it is clear that an argument which may be valid in respect to the clergy of the Establishment, has no force whatever in respect to those

students who have no thoughts of becoming members of the clerical profession.

Next I must beg my readers to keep clearly in view the important distinction, on which so much confusion and misrepresentation at present exist, that the question of religion forming an essential part of every education, is not, in any degree whatever, affected by the removal of the necessity of subscription to Religious Tests. Look at the lay members of the Church of England who have not been educated at the Universities; have they ever subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles? Why should those who are educated within and without the walls of a college stand upon so different a footing in this respect? Why should that be demanded as a preliminary to secular education, or to the honours and rewards of secular scholarship, which is not now demanded of those who are voluntarily and avowedly members of the Church of England, attendants on its ministrations, and partakers of its sacrament? But even more than this, not only at Durham but at Cambridge, a student may derive all the advantages that are to be obtained in the way of education without subscribing any Religious Tests. At these Universities it is only when the honours and emoluments of the University are sought that subscription to Tests is required. But will any one raise the cry of a "godless education" respecting these Universities? Yet that cry may just as well be raised now as if subscription on graduating were abolished; for the education would be identical in one case and the other; the only difference in the world being, not in the education itself, but in respect to the Degree, in the official declaration of the University as to the manner in which the students' duties have been discharged; and in respect to emoluments open to laymen, in the rewards attending successful competition. Therefore I think that those who might be inclined to raise a cry in favour of subscription to Religious Tests may save themselves the trouble, unless they like to assert that there is a "godless education" at the Universities of Durham and Cambridge, or that the Church of England pursues a godless system, because it admits members into its communion without enforcing a preliminary subscription to the Thirty-nine Articles.

I may, therefore, reasonably assume the ground that those who desire the continuance of subscription to Tests at the Universities are saddled with the *onus probandi*, and have to show why Tests which are now required nowhere else, excepting from clergymen of the Establishment, should be continued to be imposed on members of the Universities.

But I have here to notice, what is to me the most un-

accountable of all the features that have been exhibited in the discussions on this subject, namely, that some parties carry their love of Tests so far as to insist that Tests should be imposed where they themselves believe that those Tests enforce conformity with that which they hold to be erroneous. Sir James Graham and Sir Robert Inglis both insisted on the continuance of the Presbyterian Tests in the Scotch Universities, as eagerly as they had insisted on the continuance of the Episcopalian Tests in the English Universities. Now a zeal for propagating what a man believes to be true excites our sympathy even when we disagree with his propositions; we admire his honest enthusiasm, while we regret the direction it has taken, and are willing to make allowances for his seeking the exclusive establishment of that which he believes to be exclusively true. But to exhibit this desire to uphold Tests, as Tests, without any conviction as to the truth of what those Tests enforce, is to display the spirit of intolerance in a form at once repulsive and absurd. It exhibits an abstract preference for mental bondage over mental freedom; it shows an abstract preference of the principle of religious exclusiveness over the principle of religious forbearance and comprehension; it is bigotry without the excuse of faith. I can only put it to Sir James Graham that if—to borrow an illustration from Doyle's well-known caricature—Sir Robert Peel had been obliged to lighten his ship of the load of his unpopularity by making a "Jonah" of Sir James Graham, and if the whale had thrown him up on the coast of Tunis, he need not have altered one word of his argument in advocating the restriction of Mahommedan Tests, as he had previously done the restriction of Christian Tests; for of such an argument as this every part holds equally true, whether applied to the exclusiveness of the establishment of a bishop, of a presbyter, or of a mufti.

What, then, I ask, has subscription to Religious Tests to do with secular education? What has a man's holding or not holding certain debateable theological dogmas to do with his fitness for the medical profession, or for the legal profession, or for the duties of any public or private station whatever, always excepting the clerical profession? What greater reason is there that a man who is entering upon the higher branches of education with the intention of dedicating himself on leaving college to the medical profession, for example, should be obliged to hold certain debateable opinions on theology, than that a man who desires to enter the army should be required to hold certain opinions respecting medicine, or a barrister to hold certain opinions respecting strategy? When the present Queen was born, her royal mother

was attended by a physician, now deceased, who had been educated as a Presbyterian, at one of the Scotch Universities. What would any one think, if instead of summoning him on account of his eminence in his profession, he had been subjected to preliminary questions as to his opinions on the Article respecting Freewill, or on that respecting "Works before Justification," or on "Predestination and Election?" What was very properly considered was, whether the man had successfully explored the higher branches of his own profession, not what he might or might not hold concerning the subtler departments of any other. Where would have been the greater absurdity of asking what this physician's opinions respecting the Articles were, than of asking what were the opinions of the bishop or archbishop who baptized the child respecting vaccination? Yet this man, whose eminence in his profession was such that he was chosen to attend both the Duchess of Clarence and the Duchess of Kent when their issue were heirs to the crown, only owed it to his own high capacity that he was able to overcome the personal inferiority, much more strongly felt then than now, of a physician who had not graduated at an English University; and, from the same fact, he was disqualified from attaining the higher rank, even in his own profession.

Fortunately this happens to be a question on which the admirers of "things as they are" cannot repose with quiescent placidity on this principle of stagnation. For "things as they are" happen to be things quite different at Oxford and at Cambridge. If reasons of any sort whatever make it necessary that subscription to the Articles should be enforced on matriculation as at Oxford, then Cambridge ought to be closed against all non-subscribers; and on the other hand, if subscription on matriculation need not be enforced, as at Cambridge, then the same principles require that subscription on matriculation should not be demanded at Oxford. So that all who consider this question are forced to have recourse to some principle or other to guide their decision. And being thus obliged to refer to some principle, let them see how far they would like to go, and what they must be prepared to defend if their principles are carried out.

Would they desire that all persons should subscribe the Articles before they are allowed to walk in the public parks? Is it supposed that I am attributing an impossible intolerance? I am only mentioning a disqualification which formerly existed with respect to the Catholics. And it is difficult to say whether greater intolerance was shown in excluding a man then from a place of amusement than now from a place of education.

Or would those who maintain that subscription to Tests ought to be demanded from those who desire the higher branches of education, also enforce subscription to Tests before a boy is allowed to learn how to make a coat, or even to brush one when made? Here again let not any one start at the extravagance of my supposition; for I am only stating what must have occurred at these very Universities, but for a change in the University customs, having nothing whatever to do with the question, but wholly dependent on other considerations. For it is now ascertained that the vast numbers stated formerly to have belonged as members to the Universities, which might lead to the supposition that the method of grouping figures practised in high places at the present day was not wholly unknown to mediæval ingenuity, in reality arose in part from the number of tradesmen, parchment preparers, illuminators, bookbinders, and even, it is said, barbers, waiters, and other nondescripts, who were then members of the Universities. So that my supposition that the question might have arisen whether subscription to articles should or should not be enforced before a man was allowed to make a coat or to brush it when made, would then actually have had to be considered; as, if subscription had been demanded from the lay members of the Universities, every college porter, gyp, scout, and for aught I know the bedmakers too, would all have had to declare their belief in those abstruse points of theology before they could enter upon the exercise of their respectable functions. And as far as the cause of toleration goes it may almost be regretted that this is not the case; as the sheer absurdity of the thing might in that case have occasioned the simultaneous abrogation of subscription to Tests in respect to all who were not dedicated to the clerical profession. Whereas now men have to overcome the prejudices arising from inveterate habit, in considering why it would be more unreasonable to demand subscription to Tests from persons intended for tradesmen, or even for menial offices, than from persons who are entering on the higher branches of education, with a view to qualify themselves for the efficient discharge of the duties of their several stations, whether as members of professions, or filling offices of trust in public life, or with trusts hardly less important, and duties hardly less active, entering upon the sphere, which, considered in the higher sense, is scarcely less than sacred, of English private life.

The argument upon this point is so admirably stated by a writer in the *Quarterly Review*, in some excellent remarks on the Irish Colleges Bill, that I must quote the following remarks, so ably presented in themselves, and so interesting

from the source to which they owe their publicity:—"Persons belonging to each of these three denominations [Church of England, Presbyterian and other Protestant Dissenters, and Roman Catholics] are equally entitled to fill every situation and office under the crown, excepting that of Lord Chancellor —they may be and are electors, corporators, attorneys, lawyers, doctors, clergy, generals, admirals, judges, members of the House of Commons, Peers; but the education which is to fit men for those professions and stations, you will bestow on one only of the three, &c." *Quarterly Review*, for June, 1845, p. 274. Of course the reviewer's remarks were intended for a different subject, namely, as I have stated, for the Irish Colleges; but I think that I have now done away with the usual grounds of defence of subscription at the Universities sufficiently to hope that many may now adopt the above statement as a general proposition.

VI.

It must be on no vague and indefinite grounds that subscription to Religious Tests must be advocated in connection with the Universities. If a clear case cannot be made out in their favour, their abrogation is demanded by that very fact. The evils of their existence are so obvious, that a strong case must be made out for their being maintained to render their continuance tolerable. It must be some overwhelming balance in support of Tests that must outweigh the objections arising from the snare to tender consciences which such Tests afford—the *primâ facie* absurdity of demanding uniformity of opinion on abstract points of theology for purposes with which those abstract points have nothing in the world to do—the manifest impossibility of obtaining from youthful and immature minds an assent arising from honest conviction on points respecting which the ripest scholars and most practised theologians must constantly differ—the insincerity respecting matters of religion encouraged by such a system—the mental seduction practised to induce submission to a rule from which youthful ingenuousness would otherwise revolt—the inconsistency of trying to connect religion with education by a method which all religion must condemn.

Let it not be thought that my remarks are exaggerated, or that I am representing imaginary evils. Let it not be supposed that I am using language which might be just if applied to a Jesuit college, but which is extravagant if applied to an English University. I have before me an authoritative declaration, very recently delivered, of the manner in which subscription to Religious Tests is to be considered, in the words of

one of the highest dignitaries of the Church, when engaged in the exercise of the most solemn of all his episcopal functions.

The words which I proceed to quote are from the ordination charge of the Bishop of Worcester, delivered on the 20th December, 1845; on the occasion, be it remarked, not of addressing young men desirous of matriculating or graduating at a University, but of addressing men then entering upon their sacred office as clergymen of the Establishment. I quote the passage which refers to the subject of subscription to Tests at length, to avoid the possibility of misrepresentation:—"My dear young friends, you have gone through all the forms required by the law previous to your admission, to-morrow, into the sacred orders of deacons and priests. You have acquitted yourselves in your examination to the satisfaction of my chaplain, and you have this day declared yourselves faithful members of the Church of England by subscribing the Thirty-nine Articles, which have been framed as Tests of your really holding those doctrines which she professes as her distinctive characteristics, and which she believes may be proved by the sure warrant of Scripture. *Allow me to express a hope* (!) that in performing this duty you have not merely complied with a form directed by the Legislature as necessary previous to your ordination, but that you have well considered the different doctrines involved in these Thirty-nine Articles, and by the subscription of your names thereto given your *bonâ fide* assent to them. *When, however, I require this of you, I do not require that you, young as you are, and with your minds furnished necessarily with a comparatively small portion of theological learning, should have made up your minds upon the many dark points of divinity involved in some of these articles*—fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute—subjects of such intricacy and difficulty, that even celestial substances are represented by the poets, when they attempted to discuss them, as having

> 'Found no end in wandering mazes lost.'

To require perfect unanimity upon such points is to suppose, in the words of Paley, 'that the Legislature expected the consent of 10,000 men, and that in perpetual succession, not to one controverted proposition, but to many hundreds.' In considering, then, the obligation imposed upon you when you subscribed the Thirty-nine Articles, we will take the most liberal view of the question, which has been taken by that eminent philosopher to whom I have just referred. He states, in his work on Moral Philosophy, that the two points to be considered by those who wish conscientiously to subscribe the

Thirty-nine Articles are, 'Quis imposuit et quo animo,'" &c., &c.* The bishop then goes on to point out that as these Tests were introduced with the intention of excluding the Roman Catholics, those who hold Romish opinions ought to hold themselves excluded by the Articles from becoming clergymen of the establishment.

Now, I hold it to be impossible to maintain subscription to Tests in connection with education, when their existence is defended by the admission that it is not required that a man shall believe, and, indeed, that it is almost impossible that he should believe, the very things which he is nevertheless required to state that he does believe. Was I too harsh in using the words "mental seduction" in reference to such a system? Did Jesuitism in the worst forms of its worst casuistry surpass the insincerity of asseveration here advocated? "Sin," the Jesuits said, "is a wilful departure from the commands of God: therefore the consent of the will is necessary to make the commission of any act sinful; thus perjury is in itself a deadly sin; but the man who only swears outwardly, without inwardly intending what he swears, is not bound by his oath, for he does not swear, he jests." The jesuitical defence of perjury, and the untruth to be allowed in subscription to the English Tests, seem to stand in the relation of proposition and corollary. But surely the days must be numbered of a system that has to be defended on such grounds as these, and when the odious principle of a 'non-natural sense' is to be professed in support of the system adopted in institutions for English education.

The fruits by which the tree may be known have been strikingly exhibited in those painful, but most interesting records which Dr. Arnold's life affords, of the manner in which the repugnance of ingenuous youth to subscriptions from which he in his heart recoiled, was overcome by that union of authority and sophistry which so often succeeds in effecting that indistinct wavering of the mind, which brings about assent without ending in conviction. Arnold was a man who carried his love of Christianity into every idea he formed of human action, of civil polity, of literary merit. The being a Christian was what seemed to him to give its special value to existence; it was the one standard to which the most comprehensive principles and the smallest details of action were alike to be referred: selfishness seemed to be destroyed in him by his habitually regarding himself only as a part of the great Christian whole. Even in now pointing out a failing in such a man, I do it, not so much with any emotion of charity towards

* See the charge in the *Morning Herald* of 26th Dec., 1845.

himself, as with a kindly feeling towards the error from which we gather instruction.

But see what the mental reservation enforced in youth had spread to in manhood, in such a mind as Arnold's. He writes, "*I do not believe the damnatory clauses in the Athanasian creed, under any qualification given of them, except such as substitute for them propositions of a wholly different character.* ..... But I read the Athanasian creed, and have, and would again, subscribe the article about it, because I do not conceive the clauses in question to be essential parts of it, or that they were retained deliberately by our Reformers, after the propriety of retaining or expunging them had been deliberately submitted to their minds..... 'What we require you to embrace [the Reformers would have said] is the belief of the general church as expressed in the three creeds, with regard to the *points* many of them having been disputed, on which those creeds pronounce; the degree of blameableness in those who do not embrace their belief is another matter, on which we do not intend to speak particularly in this article.' *I do not think there is any thing evasive or unfair in this.*" Yet the article referred to, the eighth, declares that the three creeds "ought *thoroughly* to be received and believed," and the Creed begins by stating that he who does not keep the Catholic faith "*whole* and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And the Catholic faith is this," &c. &c.; and ends by stating, "this is the Catholic faith; which, except a man believe *faithfully*, he cannot be saved."

Did Arnold, or do others, keep the Catholic faith as defined in this Creed, "whole," do they believe it "faithfully"? If not, is it not terrible to think what imprecations upon themselves they invoke when they recite this Creed, and this during the exercise of their most sacred functions, and upon the occasions set apart by the Church as of especial solemnity? But upon this general question I do not enter; all that I have now to consider is, whether subscriptions to Tests that require or lead to, all this mental reservation and insincerity, to use the very mildest terms, can be necessary, or can be tolerable, in institutions for British education; whether we, who have so peculiarly as a nation, worked out our own freedom, and so nobly conferred on others that blessing which we had ourselves attained—whether we can longer tolerate this mental bondage, this enforced slavery of one man's mind to the will, or even caprices of another man's mind. Shall we not soon come to regard, as we now do those who in Richard the Second's time declared that they would resist personal enfranchisement at whatever cost, those who now resist enfran

chisement from this mental serfdom? Shall we longer maintain that Tests which have to be defended on grounds that might seem bold to a Jesuit, shall form an essential part of secular education at an English University?

I am satisfied that this straining after an enforced conformity owes its main support to that desire which I have elsewhere examined, to have the Church of England considered as endowed with exclusive claims as the Church of Christ, possessing exclusive efficacy in the ministrations of its priesthood, and entitled to exclusive authority from the divinity of its origin. I do not blame any members of this church for desiring the successful propagation of that which they hold to be true. I do not blame them for desiring that what they hold to be true should supplant what they hold to be erroneous; but I must remind them that these claims are held with equal sincerity by various other religious bodies; each with an equal faith in the divine origin of its claims, and with no possibility of any earthly authority deciding their respective pretensions. Yet it is this feeling which is now leading the Church of England into that claim of catholicity and that intolerance towards Dissent which seems so strange to all who remember that the Church of England is itself nothing more than that one of the forms of Dissent to which the Legislature has thought fit to attach certain privileges. The manner in which members of the English Church strive to evade the stigma of Dissent for themselves, and to attach that stigma to other religious bodies, has in it something almost ludicrous, from the utter impossibility of justifying their leaving the Church of Rome by any proposition that does not include a justification for others leaving the Church of England. And I believe that it is this impossibility that has had the chief efficacy in leading some of those who held the high church notions into what may almost be considered the legitimate result of their opinions, in going over to the Church of Rome. Dr. Wordsworth says that a French regular, of great learning and reputation, having told him that the English high church party must go over to Rome at last, "I told him we should be happy to do so, as far as Holy Scripture allowed us; but we could not find that there exists any authority independent of a direct revelation, and none such was now to be expected to propound articles of faith not found in Scripture, and still less in opposition to it." A direct revelation in opposition to Scripture? I think the "learned French regular" must have wondered what the Doctor was about. "He said that Rome was disposed to make all advances towards us that she could consistently do: she was willing, as he expressed it, 'to open her arms to

us, but she could not move her feet!'" * I think this notion of making "advances" must have been a quiet joke of the learned regular, in return for the Doctor's above cited.

But the limited claims of the Church of England are shown by the fact that it is not even the established church of the United Kingdom; the same legislative authority to which the Church of England owes its position as the Church of England, has given its sanction to the privileges of another church as the Church of Scotland. The Scotch peers must be either dissenters from their own national church, when living in their own country, or they must be dissenters when they come up to attend Parliament; their sons must either be dissenters on the estates on which they are to live, or must labour under the disabilities of dissenters in respect to Oxford and Cambridge; and, on the other hand, the English who possess Scotch estates cannot even visit their own property without the instant infection of the taint of dissent. The question of conformity or non-conformity, of belonging to the establishment or of being members of dissent, varies with every Englishman and every Scotchman as often as either crosses the Tweed. And the members of the English Church advancing these claims to catholicity, not only cannot obtain any recognition of their claims from any foreign establishment, but absolutely cannot advance their pretensions in the northern part of our own island, without being in the position of the Irishman at Paris trying to persuade the Frenchmen that they were the foreigners.

I regret that want of space must prevent my taking more than a very cursory view of the beneficial results that I believe must arise from the abrogation of Religious Tests in the Universities. Foremost stands the direct good that must inevitably ensue, from the very nature of moral action, on the substitution of a straightforward course for an indirect one; of frankness instead of insincerity; of hearty assent instead of mental reservation; of ceasing to have recourse to the unworthy frauds of a "non-natural sense" in connection with that religion of which the whole value depends upon truth. Next comes the emancipation from that mental bondage of which the trammels must be felt in exact proportion as restraint is undesirable, binding the careless by no shackles, but appearing as prison-bars to the earnest. And finally, the advance of that high charity which, without swerving from its own convictions, shall look with perfect forbearance on the sincere convictions of all other men.

Those who would deem that there is a possibility that the

* Diary in France, p. 26.

cause of Christian truth should suffer from the association of men avowedly holding different religious tenets, must have a very different estimate of the force of truth from that which I entertain. Far from believing that truth can be overcome by error, I have the firmest faith that the two can never meet as antagonists in an open field without the victory finally resting with truth. In my opinion, the success of many of the errors that have misled mankind has arisen from the truths that have been mixed up with those errors. To this source have I always attributed the success of the Roman Catholic faith; the truths which it embodied had power to sustain it, notwithstanding all the corruptions with which it has been disfigured. And far from fearing that the tendency to Romanism should increase, I sincerely believe that it will diminish, from the education of Roman Catholics at the same Universities with Protestants. I do not believe that we shall add to their number from our own ranks, but I do believe that we shall add to our numbers from theirs. The state has now tried for centuries to extinguish Romanism by persecutions and disqualifications, and it has not succeeded. I sincerely believe that a different issue may await the experiment of bringing up members of the Roman and of the Protestant faith in the same institutions. The same feelings which now induce a few to go over to the Roman church might still produce the same results then. But the same feelings which now induce the greatest number to adhere to the Protestant churches would also be in operation then, and would, in my opinion, produce vast results in producing approximation first, and conformity afterwards, in those who would no longer be restrained by shame from abandoning a persecuted faith.

We know that the Port-Royalists held the tenets of Romanism in a manner that disallowed most of the objectionable parts of Papistry. We have most interesting evidence that in the same manner has the Romish faith been professed by the better spirits in many ages. To this would probably be the first advance. But, going so far, many would not stop here. The evils of their ecclesiastical polity would dissolve the charm which previously existed of regarding the whole system as unassailable, because resulting from infallibility. A priesthood dedicated to the guidance and comfort of their fellow men, yet shut out from the dearest of human sympathies by impassable barriers; only knowing as temptations thoughts which lead others to the most sacred of human ties; sanctioning the holy rite on the happiness of which it would be madness to think; blessing the infant whose caress must never gladden their existence; visiting the sick bed where

affliction is relieved by tenderness that must never cheer their isolated destiny; standing alone by the grave to envy the affections that cherished during life, even under the sadness of bereavement—this system, I say, I believe will be continually forsaken among men who are brought up in the presence of another system, no longer restrained by the shame of leaving a persecuted cause, but with a free unfettered choice between the two.

I believe that the few who have left the English church to join the Romish, will be far outnumbered by those who, with aspirations after a religious life, but with a love for the domestic sympathies, will desire to enter the happy and respected sphere of the English clergy. Then the tyranny of their history as a church will dissatisfy them with a polity where all the same elements still continue in existence. For with all the abominable persecutions and cruelties which I have recounted as exercised by Protestants, I believe it to be impossible for any one to consider the struggle between Romanism and Reform without the same sort of feeling which Lord Chatham expressed respecting our own civil war, that whatever the violence and whatever the cruelty exercised by the Reformers, still nothing can convince us but that one side is the side of liberty and the other side the side of despotism. So again, with the dissenters, who have so long been placed in a position of hostility and repulsiveness in respect to the establishment; we may trust that sectarian bitterness will be replaced by the remembrance of college friendships, and that the Church Militant may no longer be engaged in the civil war of mutual animosities, but that all denominations may be regarded as different battalions of the same army, engaged in the same great cause, and eager for the same victory of truth and virtue over sin and error.

The question remains for consideration, whether Reform should proceed from within or without the Universities. That it would for many reasons be most desirable that it should proceed from within I fully admit. But where is the probability of such a reform ever taking place? Look at the constitution of those bodies, and consider that their government consists of men who have been brought up under the system which it is now sought to alter. They have placed on record their belief in the truth of tests which it is now sought to discontinue. It might, perhaps, be most agreeable to themselves, as saving them from disagreeable embarrassment, that the alteration should proceed from without. And this argument is of much greater force than

may at first appear; for it is obvious that, from the laws of those bodies with respect to the veto, many men might desire alteration which they would yet hesitate to propose, or even to join others in aiming at, because if they should finally have their proposals quashed, their position among the resident members would not be perfectly agreeable, as by many they would no doubt be regarded as something like traitors who had failed in an act of treason. But that it must be a long time before any internal desire for reform will produce motion of any sort must be pretty obvious to those who have perused the recent reply of Oxford to the distinguished men who presented an address respecting certain desired improvements, which reply may be characterized as being a summary of excellent reasons for doing nothing.

Nothing need be feared by the friends of these great institutions from changes made with the comprehensive views in which, at Winchester last year, the present Bishop of Oxford stamped upon his hearers' minds how the spirit and not the forms of antiquity should be respected. I do not believe that from the association of men holding different modifications of the same faith any fear of latitudinarianism, in its sense of indifference in matters of importance, need be entertained; and I do believe that charity may at length advance to the admission that it is on the faith in which it is raised that must depend the value of the altar which each Jacob raises even to his dream, saying, This is the gate of Heaven.

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

AND

MORAL IMPROVEMENT.

"Virtus est vitium fugere, et sapientia prima stultitia caruisse."

LONDON:

JAMES RIDGWAY, PICCADILLY.

1846.

TO THE

RIGHT HON. SIR R. PEEL,

&c. &c. &c.

One of the misfortunes of the British empire and one of the chief perplexities of its rulers, consists in its rapid growth and yearly accumulating wants. To satisfy these the old machinery has long been confessedly inadequate, and no master mind seems at hand to provide a remedy for the evil necessity of adjourning, or rather indefinitely postponing, many legislative measures of primary justice and utility.

This practice of eternal procrastination is convenient enough for the lazy conscience of a Prime Minister of the ordinary stamp; it covers a multitude of sins, and furnishes a ready excuse for all omissions. But it is ruinous to the character of any assembly which allows, or any statesmen who connive at it. As long as it continues neither the ability nor good intentions of the leading men of both parties will inspire sufficient confidence to induce the public to do that which I am about to attempt, perhaps at the risk of ridicule for my chivalry, namely, to invoke their aid in rescuing

the best people on the civilized world from a moral and intellectual debasement, of which the Government itself the very party appealed to is, in a great measure, the guilty and responsible cause.

If I am asked why I feel encouraged to make this appeal, I answer that your last political act is sufficiently characterised by personal sacrifices to prove incontestibly that you possess qualities, and a paramount sense of duty to your country, which will not rest quite satisfied while any great moral or religious obligation remains, not only unperformed, but unattempted. Some of your* appointments have shewn that mere fools or tools are not all that you require to fill places of public trust; who knows but your experience of knaves may, in like manner, induce a preference in future for truthful integrity over ingenious falsehood, the convenience whereof is transitory, the discredit permanent; it is the balance of good over evil, in their public capacity, which decides upon the reputation of statesmen. The latter portion of the life of Augustus was necessary to efface the memory of his youth. The last act of your's, will, however laudable, scarcely avail you to the same extent. We must have something more. *We* cannot forget, though *your party does*, how long your talents protracted their existence—how long you resisted the best measures which now illustrate the statute-book. How you

* That of Sir Wm. Erle to the Bench, and Lord Westminster to the Lieutenancy of Cheshire.

recalled this party into life when scared by the Reform Bill, they, like a certain herd in Scripture, ran down the precipice of despair, till awakened by your horn sounding the invitation to register their brute force in a long successful array against the reason, the talents, and wants of the community—as it is now arrayed against yourself. However great the boon may be of a total change in our commercial system, it is but a recantation of practical errors, which you, after all, are the last to expose, and a return to sound, though long repudiated doctrines, of which you are by no means the promulgator.

It is true that at this moment none but yourself could have overcome the odds and obstacles opposed to you; but it must not be forgotten that those obstacles were nurtured and confirmed, if not created, by yourself. I am the last to question your title to national gratitude, or to deny that you have earned a stock of it enough to trade upon for a while, but not for ever; for who can say, because Ulysses preferred his old woman to immortality, that you have earned your apotheosis by losing the confidence of the honourable and gallant Member for Lincoln, or of scores besides, whose friendship you have lost, because—

> "No friendship can abide the test,
> That stands on sordid interest,
> Or mean self-love erected.
> Nor such as may awhile subsist
> '*Twixt Premier and Monopolist*,
> For vicious ends connected."

What is it, then, that we expect of you, "Si pater Patriæ velis subscribi statuis ?"

To improve the Reform Bill, extend the Franchise, cry Ballot and let loose the dogs of war, and play the Liberal in politics, as you have done in commerce? By no means! Feeling and interest alike forbid us from counselling any such inconsistencies to an useful and able statesman. All we ask is your aid in doing that which will profit and please all parties, by at length arresting the further progress of abuses which have disgraced the last half century of our history, and placed Britain in the rear ranks of European civilization.

GIVE US THEN A SYSTEM OF NATIONAL EDUCATION *worthy of the name*, AND CORRECT YOUR PENAL DISCIPLINE, SO THAT YOUR PRISONS MAY CEASE TO PROPAGATE CRIME. Your sagacity and acquaintance with business will, or ought, to place you in a condition to accomplish these objects with your intrinsic resources, if not, you know where to look for sound assistance and ready co-operation from your political opponents. In the meanwhile, deign, Sir, to cast your eye on what follows from your obedient Servant,

A MAGISTRATE.

PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

AND

MORAL IMPROVEMENT.

These two mighty questions are waiting and ready to engross public attention the instant that room is given them by the disposal of your present commercial scheme; and if the proposed changes necessary to remove ignorance and vice have powerful advocates, they will also be met by as powerful opponents as ever contended against Free Trade. But there will be this important difference, that the sticklers for maintaining our present amount of vice and ignorance, are aided mainly by their prejudices; while the corn monopolists owe their union and cohesion to their pecuniary interests, which constitute them what may truly be called, in the strictest sense, *Pocket Companions.*

It is perfectly notorious, that while on the one hand our Hierarchy have, for many years, opposed the introduction of a sound system of *general* education, the dissemination of crime, on the other hand, is going on as rapidly as if it had been the result of the most ingenious systematic contrivance,

and that in the very places where proclamations are periodically made against immorality and vice, in the Sovereign's name, at every assize. Most of the prisons in the United Kingdom are little better than colleges for instruction in every sort of wickedness, although under the immediate direction of the Secretary of State and Magistrates. What is the consequence? why, that crime is increasing with fearful rapidity! What the consolation? That the increase of lawyers, and of their profits, keeps pace with it! and, therefore, you will get no lawyer, from attornies general to attornies particular, (who live by Petty Sessions,) to listen to any legislative attempt to rescue young offenders from gaol contamination by a merciful law (in cases of a first offence, often of the most trivial nature) giving the parties the option of a summary conviction in preference to the *great advantage* they now enjoy of a *glorious trial* by jury! preceded by imprisonment, a counsel to tell useless lies for them, at the expence of the county rate-payers—association with criminals of the worst kind, with the gallows or transportation in prospect.

What old Justice of Quarter Sessions, what Old Bailey bird, in the precincts of our courts, would you get to listen to such a mitigation of our cruel, wasteful, and demoralizing practice, as a Bill for summary punishment of young offenders? Some of our judges, to their infinite honour, have expressed no such repugnance; and the best of them are un-

derstood to be warm advocates for such changes. In the meanwhile, the cause of our regeneration has been taken up by parties not likely to abandon it. Are they Statesmen? No! *They* have no time to do good whose days and nights are engrossed by some great topic of expediency. Year after year thousands of unfortunate youths are converted to crime and impiety for want of prisons fitted to receive them, when charged with the most trifling offences, for which a few days of restraint would be a more than adequate punishment; and all this is constantly occurring in a country boasting its high moral and religious principles; where the Church is represented by twenty-nine Prelates, who sit in Parliament without uttering a syllable concerning the gigantic abuses to the continuance of which we must therefore account them as assentients.

All the good hitherto done to arrest this national disgrace has been attempted in a few short months in Middlesex, Dorsetshire, Berkshire, Northamptonshire, Somersetshire, and Cheshire; in the latter county, moreover, a Bill for Summary Conviction of Juvenile Offenders was strongly recommended by the Lord Lieutenant, but the chairman inveighed against it as interfering with the rights of the subject, trial by jury, &c. The plain English of which was, that it would deprive a host of lawyers of some of those exorbitant profits which enrich them, and impoverish the public and the county rate-payers to the extent of several thousand pounds yearly.

In short, it is a regular system, which not only provides ample profits for them, but serves to the constant prospective increase of those profits, by propagating the crimes which constitute their foundation, on pretence of seeing fair play and defending innocence, affording, at the same time, a chance of escape to the student in crime. In some counties the Quarter Sessions have increased from four to eight times yearly, while the assizes are held frequently three times. Whatever the criminal case may be, no matter how trivial, it is generally asked who defends the prisoner, which is as much as to say that he will act prudently by engaging a lawyer; and whether he pleads guilty, or not guilty, the lawyer's fee for prosecuting is paid at the charge of the county rate-payers. In Scotland, Dorsetshire, Staffordshire, and some other counties, neither barristers nor attornies are paid by the public, except in difficult cases, and yet the attendance of Barristers is nevertheless respectable. All this enormous expense is defended under the pretence of a respect for the rights of the subject, trial by jury, and other claptraps, to impose upon and furnish an excuse for the vain and weak, who cannot see through them. As if giving a poor child, perhaps impelled by hunger, or profligate parents, to the commission of some trifling offence, a sentence of a few days confinement, by summary conviction, could be regarded in any other light than a merciful intervention to save a young

creature from destruction, and his industrious neighbours from a charge of from 40 to 80 or 100 pounds in effecting it. For three years the expenditure of Cheshire amounted within a fraction to £50,000 a-year, whereas in the wiser county of Northumberland their annual charges do not exceed £7000 or £8000, and by the subjoined Report of the Chaplain* of *one* prison it will be seen that the loss of moral character has even outrun that of property sacrificed to this pretended regard to ancient forms and the "Rights of the subject."

The severity of the punishments forms another prominent abuse, offensive alike to reason and to justice.

Prisoners are confined six months where six days would suffice.

Such are the variations to which uncontrolled magisterial dominion is liable, and such the necessity for stringent remedies, and uniformity of system.

Had these measures in opposition to the propagation of crime and the wasteful expenditure attending endless and costly prosecutions, and paying fees for doing nothing, been carried when first proposed years ago, many counties would have been the richer by thousands of pounds, and many thousands of human beings rescued from utter ruin

* See Appendix, IV.

by needless evil association within costly prisons. Of the annual extent of demoralization actually going on, the Report alluded to will convey some idea: 380 youths under 17 were last year consigned to ruin in one gaol.

It will therein also appear that Stockport, a town of 50,000 inhabitants, furnished only 100 inmates to the Knutsford gaol; whereas Macclesfield afforded out of a population of only 32,000, above double the number of criminals. How does this happen? Are the Macclesfield people intrinsically worse than those of Stockport in this awful proportion? Nobody believes anything of the sort. But we may fairly ascribe the disproportion to the different systems adopted in the two boroughs.

Stockport possesses a superintendent of police in Mr. Sadler, who has the virtue to sacrifice official gain, by using the same efforts in preventing crime as others shew in the detection of it; the humanity and abilities of this officer render his opinions entitled to the best attention of all who desire to arrest the progress of national debasement, and it is hoped that they will attract the notice of the Secretary of State, and assist in rousing him into the active performance of his most important duties.* No one who knows Sir James Graham's indefatigable attention to business, and his ability in the discharge of it will dispute his capacity; and if he

* See Appendix, III.

is so engrossed as to be unable to attend to prison details, the task ought to be assigned to some other person, for the abuses are sufficiently monstrous in many respects. Take an instance quite unconnected with the present subject. The dietary in Tothill-fields Prison is so good, and, it would seem, the situation of criminals so little otherwise irksome, that young persons, perfectly able but unwilling to work, repeatedly commit offences in order to entitle themselves to removal from St. George's workhouse to that prison.* The present rule seems to be, that whereas the idle but able-bodied vagabond, who prefers the workhouse to a home for which he would have to pay by the sweat of his brow, ought to fare better than his honest and hardworking neighbour; therefore, the man who commits an offence against the laws of his country shall fare better than either. This is what Mr. Sadler justly terms spurious humanity. Your prisons are filled because they are no longer places of punishment, nor ever will be till their inmates are kept in separation. Offenders are recommitted time after time because these once awful receptacles are now so comfortable as to inspire no longer any dread; turning out their inmates in better health than they came in, teaching them trades, for the learning of which they must have paid had they not become criminals. The nation,

* If this be doubted, let the Right Hon. Gentleman inquire how often William Griffiths has broken the windows of St. George's workhouse, for the sake of such promotion.

moreover, which denies them a general and sound system of religious, moral, and useful instruction, generously affords them within its prison walls gratuitous instruction in every crime which disgraces humanity, leaving them the free choice of their road and mode of reaching the gallows. No arrangement, or sufficient distinction is made in the occupants of the very few cells which each gaol could appropriate for the purposes of separation, instead of these being reserved for first offenders, or parties of whose reformation some hope might be entertained, they are often thrown away upon the hopeless and incorrigible.

Were a Bill to pass for summary convictions for a few days, in cases of first offenders of tender years, it would clear your prisons of half their inmates, leaving you room to separate the remainder. Without such a Bill you must be constantly adding to these costly constructions, as population increases, and crime along with it, fostered by the poisons everywhere spread by a paternal Government, which, with all its vigour and wisdom in other respects, is become, as regards the moral training of its people, the by-word and opprobrium of Europe. But let us suppose that some of our legislative guardians in the Ministry, or out of it, becoming awake to the sinfulness of allowing a people to go to perdition faster than any attempts are making to regenerate them, —suppose the Juvenile Offenders Bill hereto subjoined, submitted to the patronage of the Home Secre-

tary, what would he do? He would turn to one of his legal advisers for his opinion upon a matter affecting lawyer's profits. He will consult Catiline upon the best mode of suppressing conspiracies; and if he be too busy, he will turn to Othello, and beg him to consider about the loss of his occupation, and he will get a shake of the head, with the words "trial by jury," (which this Bill does nowise interfere with, leaving it quite optional) and down drops the Bill, never to rise again for a quarter of a century.

But he will perhaps consult some chairman, paid or unpaid, of Quarter Sessions. No matter which; if paid, it is for doing a certain amount of business, which, if materially reduced, might menace the salary with corresponding reductions. He will say he objects to increasing the power of magistrates; which is sure to produce a flourish of trumpets, though the power demanded is for the exercise of mercy, like that of taking bail. He will resist the lowering the tribunal in cases of theft, as calculated to increase that offence, though he must be aware that such is scarcely possible, when his own experience must have known instances of a dozen re-committals of the same party. He will urge the liability of magistrates to be imposed upon occasionally, as to what are first offences, as if the police were not generally a sufficient security, or as if such rare occurrences constituted a fair objection against a

generally merciful and beneficial practice. If the chairman be unpaid in money, the honour and distinction of his position are his motives for action, and such persons are apt, like many others, to become monopolists to their own detriment. They like presiding over an array of lawyers, who call them learned; they study the interests of solicitors, some times for reasons not strictly connected with justice; and right few of them will ever consent to part with any share of a business for which practice is wont to increase the appetite. In short, the wrong man is generally consulted, and not the less likely to be so under the severe and harassing pressure of public business. The real authorities on such subjects are intelligent governors and chaplains of gaols, whose opinions may be tested by their daily books and periodical reports. These are safer guides than desultory opinions of practising lawyers, whose interests, like those of policemen, certainly do not tend to the diminution of offences, and who have a natural feeling towards the fraternity, even when they scorn profit individually.

Few besides* Sir Peter Laurie set at nought documentary evidence in matters which they profess to investigate; still fewer openly espouse the cause of moral contamination upon the novel plea of the morals of youths in prison being safer under association than under separation. This gallant knight has the courage to speak out without the

* See his pamphlet.

least subterfuge. He comes forth in the full panoply of universal incredulity as to every authority, ancient or modern, which interferes with his own theory, which he thinks so incontrovertible that neither statistical, or any other proofs, are necessary to sustain it. He has discovered, contrary to Horace's hitherto admitted truism, that one mangy pig will infect a whole herd of swine, that it is both wholesome and lawful to let them rub against one another, and that they will acquire each other's disorders at far less moral loss than their individual stock will increase if separated. He has discovered that offenders so kept separate are liable to disease, insanity, and death, the same as all other men and aldermen, and without proving any disproportion in these visitations, by stating, in every instance, the gross numbers from which the casualties are selected, takes for granted that they died, or grew consumptive, by seeing only the chaplain instead of hearing sounds of blasphemy and sin from their superiors in wickedness. All professions of regeneration are voted hypocritical; all attempts to compel youth to observe prison rules by punishment, however slight, are denounced as atrocious!

The Reports of the model prisons, sanctioned by public inspectors, and medical men of first rate honour and skill, are denounced without the slightest evidence, as wilful falsehoods. Old tales of cases of insanity are reproduced from America, when it is

notorious that in the great prison at Philadelphia, where the separate system has been long in improved practice, such cases have been *under* the ordinary proportion in numbers,—with other disgusting particulars to serve the purposes of delusion in favor of the old and mischievous system of aggregation which is covering the kingdom with criminals faster than we can build prisons to hold them. The separate system is voted worthless, because convicts who leave it for New Zealand experience nausea and sickness when crossing the ocean; why, a similar fate might have attended Alderman Sir William Curtis himself, in his by no means solitary voyages. It is in vain to guess at the motives of such works as the above, but there certainly is one which may be apprehended as entering the lists against adapting ill-conducted prisons for the separate system, and that is the expence necessary to make such receptacles warm and healthy, without which no inspector ought to certify their fitness for use, otherwise the cruelty falsely ascribed to the system would be manifest.

It is perfectly true that insanity did visit Pentonville prison in the first year of its establishment, but this calamity was an accident, and had no more connection with the system (which continues unaltered) than with the state of the weather; it was the result of error quite unconnected with the medical department, and corrected as soon as discovered; as to the mortality it is less in this prison than out of it.

But supposing all Sir Peter Laurie has stated, all his "crushing facts,"* were true, instead of being utterly falsified by the prison reports, attested by the most respected authorities, what man of ordinary sense would not consider the impaired health of a few individuals consigned to prison after a life of disorder and intemperance, likely enough to produce unsoundness, of less public importance than the utter depravation of tens of thousands every year sacrificed to public covetousness, which denies them a proper receptacle, supplying them with bad company instead of a place of punishment, and rendering the admonitions of the clergyman alike irksome to himself, and profitless to his hearers. The most ingenious devices are often used to prevent the Chaplain's success in reclaiming the guilty, by sentencing criminals to alternate periods of separation and evil association, thus keeping up a sort of studied rivalry between criminal and moral intercourse, in which the parson is pretty sure to have the worst. And because all this abominable mismanagement fails to work impossibilities; therefore official indolence despairs of the good consequences which it takes no pains to ensure, and keeps doggedly sowing the dragon's teeth, rather than set about the task of reformation.

Were it of the slightest importance to investigate the reasons which prompted the worthy alderman to disseminate error, and perpetuate moral contamination, the weight of his reasons might pro-

* See Account of Milbank in the Appendix, No. VIII.

bably be estimated by reckoning what it would cost to put the prisons of the metropolis, which, with the exception of Pentonville, are among the worst in the kingdom, into a fit state to receive prisoners, without making them worse than they were before entering these nurseries for crime. The civic ear is readily disposed to listen to any arguments tending to obviate a tax of some hundred thousand pounds. Meanwhile, though our means are inadequate to strike this balance between economy and virtue, we will venture to put the worthy knight, his pamphlet, his facts, and his reasons, in one scale, and in the other, the direct contradiction to them, contained in the last Report of Pentonville Prison, subscribed by a number of authorities, any one of which is, *to say the least*, equal to his own, though one and all are charged by him, in pretty plain terms, as lending their names to untrue statements.* Let the public judge of the merits of the separate system, attested by men like Sir B. Brodie and Lord John Russell, compared with the unsustained opinions of Sir Peter (of whom we here take a final leave) in favour of the superior advantages of bad company for novices in crime. The Prison Inspectors who recommend separation have not been over complimentary to the three or four prisons which occasionally fall under the worthy Alderman's inspection ; and he, perhaps, wishes in this way to evince his gratitude.

* See Appendix for the Pentonville Report.

I shall now endeavour to draw your attention to the several points in which your prison discipline is not only defective, but positively mischievous, and to suggest the remedies which occur for the cure of these reproaches to your Government.

I have shewn, and shall annex documents* to prove, that your prisons, instead of being places of punishment, are rather asylums for incorrigible vagabonds, who return to them for the sake of better fare than they could procure by day labour at home; that this, together with the temptation of leaving their families chargeable upon the honest industry of their neighbours during their imprisonment, appears irresistible, from the constant repetition of re-commitments of the same parties. The remedy of the latter lies, obviously, in enacting that all gaolers should separate their criminals. The gaolers and magistrates who have long trodden in the wheel of old and mischievous practice, will at once sneer at this, and deny their power to make the additional room requisite for such a change. I assert that nothing is more easy or practicable. But to the proof. You cannot deny that prisons have no longer any terrors for persons who are constantly re-committed to them? You must, therefore, admit the propriety of restoring your management to a somewhat more penal character, which will, of itself, enlarge your gaols as much as the outlay of thousands expended in brick and mortar

* Appendix V., VI., VII.

additions. If you increase the intensity of your punishments common justice suggests that you should shorten their duration; and the most experienced gaolers will tell you that from one to two months of separation is a more severe and effective punishment than six months awarded in the ordinary way, and that criminals rarely, if ever, return to prisons so managed. Here is then a mode of enlarging your prisons, not only without cost, but to an actual saving in money, as well as morals, amounting to 300 per cent. upon the existing charges for maintaining the prisoners who now fill your prisons, and intend, so long as you mismanage, to return to them. The enactment, therefore, making it imperative to separate prisoners, would prove a source of economy, instead of expense, to such counties as have not already adopted it; and that economy would be materially increased were all juvenile offenders under a certain age, short of what are called years of discretion, committed summarily for a few days for petty offences, of which they were never before convicted, instead of occupying our prisons before as well as after trial, as under our present laws they must do, to their utter ruin: the remedy for which may be found in the following Bill, which, though never rejected, was withdrawn in the year 1829, for want of adequate support in the House of Commons.

A Bill to extend the Power of Summary Convictions of Juvenile Offenders.

WHEREAS there has of late been a great increase of Petty Crimes: And whereas great loss, inconvenience and injury has ensued from the crowded state of the Prisons and the increased number of Criminal Prosecutions: And whereas great Mischief has ensued from the certain contamination of Morals to which Offenders of tender age are necessarily exposed, by being committed to Prison and there kept associated with other Criminals, for months previous to Trial, for the smallest acts of Felony, owing to the want of Legal Power in Magistrates summarily to convict in such cases: And whereas such Offenders from loss of character, are frequently abandoned by their Masters and Friends, and thereby led into a dissolute course of life, after the expiration of the Sentence passed upon them at such Trials:

Be it therefore Enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the Authority of the same, That from and after the Passing of this Act, it shall be lawful for any Two or more Justices of the peace assembled in petty sessions, to try all persons under the age of Fifteen, charged with simple Larcenies, who shall not, to the knowledge of said justices, have been before convicted of any such offence, and where the value of the goods stolen shall not exceed Ten Shillings; and all persons so tried before the said Justices, shall, upon being acquitted, be forthwith discharged; in which cases, or in case of a conviction under this Act, no further legal Proceedings shall be instituted against any such person or offenders for the same offence; a Copy of which acquittal or conviction, certified by the Clerk of the Peace of such county, riding, division, or place, or his deputy, shall be received in evidence in all courts of Justice whatsoever.

And be it Enacted, That the said Justices shall have power to sentence all persons so convicted as aforesaid, to

Imprisonment, with (or without) hard labour, or in solitude, for a term not exceeding Twenty-eight days.

And be it Enacted, That if any parent, master or relations of such offender shall, before the expiration of his or her sentence, come before one or more of the convicting Justices aforesaid, and shall satisfy such Justice or Justices that such parent, master or relation, is able and willing to furnish maintenance and employment for such criminal, it shall and may be lawful for the said Justice or Justices (if he or they shall think fit) to give an order for the discharge of such offender, at any time not exceeding Seven days before the termination of his or her sentence; and which order, the gaoler, or person having such offender in his custody, shall forthwith obey.

And be it further Enacted, That from the passing of this Act, no conviction under this Act shall be attended with the penalty of Forfeiture of Goods, or with any penalty other than what the sentence itself shall specify and inflict.

And be it further Enacted, That if any person shall be summoned as a Witness to give evidence before any Justice, touching any of the matters aforesaid, either on the part of the complainant or of the person accused, and shall neglect or refuse to appear at the time and place for that purpose appointed, and who shall not make such reasonable excuse for such neglect or refusal, as shall be admitted and allowed by such Justice, or who appearing shall refuse to be examined on oath or affirmation and give evidence, every such person shall, on conviction before such Justice, forfeit and pay for every such offence any sum not exceeding Ten pounds.

And be it further Enacted, That the Justices before whom such offender shall be convicted, shall and may and they are hereby authorized and empowered, at the request of the prosecutor, or any other person who shall appear voluntarily or on summons to give evidence against any person so accused, or on his or her behalf, to allow such sum of money as to them shall appear reasonable and sufficient for the expences they have incurred in such attendance; and although no conviction shall take place, it shall still be lawful for the said Justices, where any person shall have attended voluntarily or on summons, to order such person such sum of money as shall appear to them reasonable for the expense which they shall have incurred by reason of

such attendance; and the expenses of attendance before the said Justices, as well as the expense of conveying the offender to the House of Correction or Asylum, shall be ascertained by the certificate of such Justices, and delivered to the Treasurer of the county where such conviction or proceeding shall take place, and he is hereby authorized and required to pay the same.

And be it further Enacted, That the Two or more Justices of the Peace before whom such offender shall be brought, shall take the examinations on oath of those who give evidence of the facts and circumstances of the case, and shall put the same in writing; and such Justices shall sign such examinations, and upon conviction shall deliver the same, together with such conviction, to the Clerk of the Peace of the county where such conviction shall have taken place, to be by him kept amongst the Records of the Sessions.

And be it further Enacted, That the Justices of the Peace in their several counties, at their next quarter sessions of the peace after the passing of this Act, shall appropriate some convenient and sufficient part of the said Gaol, Prison or House of Correction within their respective counties, for the exclusive reception of offenders committed under this Act, and who may not have been before committed to any prison, entirely distinct from all other prisoners; or they shall erect, purchase or rent some building or buildings, with or without land, in any part of their respective counties, which to them may seem most fit and convenient, for the exclusive use of such offenders, and shall provide whatever appears to them to be necessary for the maintenance, labour and instruction of the said offenders; the expences incurred thereby to be defrayed out of the produce of the County Rate, in the same manner as the other expences of the Common Gaol and House of Correction of the said county are defrayed.

And be it further Enacted, That where any parent or parents of such offender shall, previous to such trial, make formal application to the Justices before whom any such offender may be brought, and shall desire that the parties accused be tried according to the regular course of law by Jury, then such Justices shall hold such offender or offenders to bail, or commit him her or them to prison, as by the ordinary course of law empowered; any thing contained in this Act to the contrary notwithstanding.

It is difficult to imagine a greater amount of public good than this measure would confer, embracing, as it does, an immense saving of public money, a check to moral contamination, and the substitution of short, but effective and merciful punishment. We now come to deal with the mischief of catching criminals by the throat, and cramming, for fear of under-feeding them — a practice which may be traced to a dread of popular outcry, often raised by the half-informed dealers in that cheapest of commodities, spurious humanity, got up on *ex parte* evidence. As matters now stand, the cottager looks up with envy to the fare of the pauper, and the pauper to that of the prisoner— For this strange anti-climax in jurisprudence by which you gratuitously throw needless charges of maintaining knaves upon honest industry, Captain Maconochie has the following remedy : —

Instead of committing prisoners for a certain number of weeks, or months, he would sentence him to redeem a certain number of marks, each representing (among other things) a given quantity of food, of different qualities, thereby encouraging habits of self-denial, by apportioning the term of confinement according to the criminal's powers of self-restraint, calculated by these redeeming marks, to be earned by a voluntary preference for the plainer over the better fare, of which he has his option.

This scheme leaves the party, in a great degree, the

arbiter of his own detention, while it would encourage habits of restraint over the evil propensities which brought him there, and prepare him, if so minded, as a fit disciple for Father Mathew. The only danger chargeable on such a scheme would be that of maintaining gluttons too long for the public convenience. At all events, to any Government hesitating between their fears of under-feeding, and their duties not to cram prisoners, the scheme is not unworthy notice. The above observations on diet only apply to short terms of confinement, in long imprisonments it is found absolutely necessary to adopt improved diet, in order to counteract the depressing effects under the separate and only really penal system.

With respect to the administration of our local courts of justice, the powers of the Secretary of State appear to be little better than effete. The unpaid and unlearned are too strong for him, and he cowers to their will, as the Bishops do to the heresies of their subordinate clergy, which but few of them either will or dare to denounce. Hence you have no uniformity in your administration of the laws. One set of magistrates sentence a boy to seven years of separate confinement, for aiding in a rescue! a momentary ebullition, which a more just tribunal would consider more than adequately punished by as many months, or even weeks. In short, severity in courts is like the excessive flogging of

soldiers and sailors, and depends not unfrequently upon the temper, health, and digestion of the commander. Persons are put into the Commission for reasons totally remote from their intrinsic merit, which ought solely to govern such appointments; magistrates are made for party purposes, of whom some have disgraced the bench by their ignorance of the very rudiments of parish schooling—because they had money or mills, or, like Justice Shallow, "had land and beeves." What can a youth know of laws, or rules of evidence, whereby to justify his being made the arbiter of men's destinies, or to constitute a check upon the severities of a prejudiced, cruel, and it may be, a corrupt, chairman, who, if checked in his course, will sometimes vituperate mercy by disclaiming his share of it. Men should be *selected* to administer the laws for other reasons than their desire of the distinction for which so few can be fitted by their education or position. It may be that no great injustice is done to breakers of the Game Laws, but nobody will believe that game preservers are likely to be the fittest administrators of them. It is understood that there are counties where the names of poachers have a cross affixed to them, which decoration serves to gain them a place in convict ships, whenever they add any other offence to that which so often commences the catalogue; nor is it here pretended that when *repeated offenders* prove their determination to break the

laws of their country—be those laws what they may —that country owes them any apology for getting rid of them as incorrigible.

What, then, is the surest course for procuring a fair and uniform administration of local courts? The selecting your chairman from barristers known for candour and a reasonable acquaintance with their profession, and the general routine of penal practice, and, above all, unconnected with local parties and prejudices. Such men would be found ready and willing enough to transact the sessional business of counties, seldom engrossing more than two or three weeks in a year, for £300. or £400.; and after two years, may be subjected to a change, unless on petition of three-fourths of the justices to retain him—why is this not done? Does the Government wait for petitions signed by tenants against the jurisdiction of their landlords, or of operatives against their employers?

Is no good ever to be done without external pressure? Must Ministers be treated like lemons before their use and virtue can be extracted?

Meanwhile are the Inspectors instructed to report on cases of unjustifiable severity, of which instances everywhere occasionally occur? If so, why are they unredressed? There is scarcely a proprietor of the soil, or of any other description of property, whether educated or ignorant, moral or otherwise, who in some counties has not been turned by the Mercury upon the Woolsack into a judge over his poorer

neighbours, whom he first commits, and then tries; and to this station we are told all trades, "from Gades to Ganges distant stream," look as their final elysium, with this difference, that they do not wish to make it a place of rest.* Latterly, their appointments have become a job, and the necessity for substituting men of competent knowledge is admitted everywhere but in Downing-street, and by some of the unpaid.

ASYLUMS.

Much has been said by men† eminent alike for their benevolence, talents, and rank, in favour of Asylums, the most useful form of which would be, constructions at the public expense, to which criminals under the most mitigated form could be sent, instead of committing them to gaol as at present, obliging their parents, agreeably to Mr. Pearson's suggestion, to maintain them. Other attempts have been made by private subscription to accomplish similar ends, but the cost is so great that the good such measures could effect is scarcely of adequate utility. It is thought by practical men that the money would go further if spent in prevention of crime. A small sum would provide additional police sufficient to check incipient vagrancy in large towns, to look into the manner in which fatherless

* Four years ago, nearly 400 were appointed at once.

† The Marquess of Westminster, &c.

children were lodged, and pay more attention than is now given to the statistics relating to poor friendless children, the offspring, and not unfrequently the unwilling instruments of crime. We begin at the wrong end.

"Principiis obsta, sero medicina paratur."

It is perfectly premature to set about any laws for the regeneration of individuals, at a cost of from 20*l.* to 30*l.* yearly, while your prisons still manufacture by thousands enough criminals to cover your extensive colonies with their poisonous emanations. The reader will see by the reports from Liverpool, contained in the appendix, that the industry of the country was taxed to upwards of 800*l.* to pay for the prosecution of only fourteen juvenile offenders, in addition to the subsequent cost of their transportation; and yet no doubt the present system will find its advocates among those who profit by it.

It has been observed by many wise and humane persons, of great weight and influence in society, that the Juvenile Offenders' Bill of 1829, inserted in this work, stops very far short of the powers required. Most assuredly it does, and for this obvious reason: because its powers are too limited to justify the Secretary of State shelving it, as was the case of Mr. Bankes' Bill of 1842, and other previous attempts to alter the law. No man of common knowledge or humanity would venture to oppose the second reading of a Bill like that of 1829; and as many in reading it a second time

will say that its fault is not going far enough, the legislature will be the more disposed to enlarge its powers in committee. When the wedge is once driven into this vicious system, there is little difficulty in feeling your way as to the extent to which it may be subsequently forced. Whoever introduces it will no doubt advert to the changes in the condition of the people, exposed, as the poorer part of them are, now more than formerly, to frequent and periodical visitations of extreme distress, naturally inducing a corresponding increase of offences against property to alleviate it. The temptation has increased along with the cause of it, and the rapid growth of our population renders our prisons, even were they no longer the nurseries of crime, inadequate to their object without constant and burthensome additions. He will probably notice the great mitigation of our once bloody and unjust code, which, instead of reserving death as the extreme of punishments for the worst atrocities, destroyed all rational graduation in punishments, by attaching forfeiture of life to comparatively trivial cases of theft, thereby exciting the offender to commit murder, as an additional security without any risk of additional penalties. He will draw a natural contrast between the necessary intervention of jurors in cases under this ancient and bloody code, and the present method of disposing of such cases; and the inference follows, that most of these petty cases, which constitute five-sixths of all the

business of sessions work in the whole kingdom, might safely be left to the summary disposition of the magistrates at petty sessions, leaving the accused party his right to appeal to the ordinary course, if so minded. Were public prosecutors appointed for each district, and paid by fixed salaries, instead of fees, temptations to get up frivolous cases would be withdrawn.

Be it remembered, that the institution of the jury was intended for the protection of the subject from arbitrary powers, and can never be pleaded in bar to a mitigation of punishment. Nor will you find many persons so zealously pleading against their own interest as to court detention six or eight weeks in prison, in order to await the chance of twelve men's coming to a different conclusion from the magistrates in petty sessions, who, be it remembred, also try the same case afterwards in *Quarter Sessions;* and if such magistrates are fit for any thing they may surely be trusted with powers inferior to those which they already possess in other cases of much greater difficulty. Besides, how great is the existing evil of committing persons to prison for long periods before their trial, which often ends in their acquittal—a step ruinous to character, even though it should be unattended by the contamination which now almost invariably accompanies it. This one argument alone is enough of itself to countervail all the objections to the change proposed. Motions

may be made in Committee, allowing justices to fine parties in three times the value of the thing stolen, and to increase the age of offenders cognizable under the act, as well as the value named in the clause, or the jurisdiction altogether; but were such changes propounded in the Bill, an excuse would be immediately afforded for rejecting it, as was the case in former Bills.

SCHEME FOR GENERAL EDUCATION.

Whoever takes the trouble to cast his eye over this work, with the documents attached to it, can hardly fail to admit the awful responsibility of a Government, which, whether from the fear of offending Churchmen or Dissenters, any longer delays the paramount obligation of providing this country with what is common to most others—a comprehensive system of education. The habits of the country are adverse to the compulsory training adopted in Prussia; but the same effects may be produced by making a certain amount of schooling a condition to certain employments, and by compelling every parish to provide the means of so far civilizing its inhabitants; were the schools erected, and the masters competent to the task, there would be no necessity to compel attendance. As to the means, with what face could a country, which, to gratify an obstinate king, or to wage foolish wars, added 600 millions to its funded debt, refuse to

contribute three or four additional millions, if necessary, to the salvation of its great and rapidly increasing population?

How few of the parish schools are in a condition at this moment to teach anything worthy of the name of general knowledge? Morals are never thought of in many of these apologies for education; and as for the religion drummed in by canes, ferules, and reproaches, it is taught in a way rather to inspire aversion than respect; while the comparative results of the improved methods, shew the very converse at the model training schools.

The failure of the efforts of educational societies to raise sufficient funds for the education of the people, proves that no merely benevolent exertions can provide for the necessities of our increasing population.

The National Society, with its greatest exertions, has raised not quite £400,000; whereas nearly £3,000,000 annually are requisite to educate the poor of England and Wales, besides a primary outlay of £200,000 for schools and masters' houses, in districts where none at present exist.

Government then must interfere, if anything is to be accomplished to meet the exigency of the case. But how is this to be done? Difficulties exist, caused by the excessive bigotry of all the sects, and the ambitious views of the Church.

The Government scheme should be:—

1. That the State shall have the direction of the secular education of the people.

2. That the religious education shall be left in the hands of the ministers of religion.

By giving up the first point, you make your scheme one vast engine of sectarian bigotry or domineering priesthood. By not maintaining the latter you render it impossible to afford religious education to the various sects of which the population is composed.

These two points gained, the next questions to solve would be:—

How funds were to be raised—1*st*, For building schools—2*nd*, For payment of teachers—3*rd*, For maintaining Normal Schools—and 4*th*, How many inspectors would be requisite, and how they should be paid.

1*st*. The expense of building the schools and masters' houses should fall upon the parishes, Government being empowered to assist those parishes unable to raise sufficient funds.

This might be accomplished as it is in all the European states where education has made any progress. A committee might be formed of ten or twenty householders, elected by the parishioners. The Parochial clergy and all the Dissenting ministers being ex-officio members. No school should be built for more than one hundred children.

The committee should be required to furnish school-room for all the children of the parish, with suitable dwellings for the masters and apparatus for the school. Levying for this purpose a tax on

all real and personal property, the amount determined by themselves; as also whether they would have different schools for the different religious denominations.

2nd. The Poor-law unions should support the teachers:—there should be one for every fifty children. Any teacher, having obtained the sanction of his religious minister and of the Government inspector, should have a right to receive £50 per annum from the union employing him.

3rd. The unions should likewise bear the expenses of Normal Schools, without interfering with those already existing belonging to the National and British and Foreign School Societies.

4th. At least 150 inspectors would be required, chosen according to the present plan. But the Government, to prevent the Dissenters fearing a hostile spirit on the part of the inspectors, might consent that the objections of ten Dissenting ministers should secure the rejection or dismissal of an inspector.

Such are the outlines of a scheme which would meet the difficulties usually foreseen.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

EXTRACT OF LAST REPORT OF PENTONVILLE PRISON.

MENTAL CONDITION OF THE PRISONERS.

The mental condition of the entire body of the prisoners has been highly satisfactory. During the past year, and up to the present time, no case of insanity, hallucination, or mental disease of any kind, has occurred among the prisoners. This is the more remarkable and satisfactory, inasmuch as it has been ascertained, subsequently to their admission, that there existed an hereditary predisposition to insanity in the case of twenty-three of the prisoners received into the prison. The particulars of their cases are given in the Chaplain's and Medical Officer's Reports in Appendix C and D. With reference to these prisoners the Chaplain states :—

"That there have been seven per cent. of prisoners admitted into the prison, from whom" (on account of this hereditary predisposition) "adverse effects might have been expected; but in whom, upon the whole, there has been considerable improvement."

The Medical Officer remarks, with reference to the same cases :—

"Several of these men, who may be considered as hereditarily predisposed to insanity, had been many months in confinement before this part of their history was discovered, and are still under the ordinary discipline, having in no way betrayed a tendency to mental disease; a fact going far to show that the system of Pentonville Prison presents nothing in itself conducive to the development of insanity."

He adds, with reference to the prisoners generally:—

"There is a general improvement in manner and address, indicative of intellectual advancement, very strikingly shown among the prisoners who have been the longest in confinement, and an increased alacrity and desire to excel in work, is, in most cases, the early result of this system of confinement."

(Signed)

Wharncliffe.	B. C. Brodie.
Richmond.	Robt. Ferguson.
Devon.	J. Jebb.
Chichester.	Wm. Crawford.
J. Russell.	Whitworth Russell.
Charles Shaw Lefevre.	

APPENDIX II.

To the above Report of Pentonville Prison may be added the following table of the state of this Prison, as regards Sanity:—

The insane cases in	1843	were	3.
In . .	1844	.	none.
In . .	1845 and up to the present time . .	.	1.

The proportion of Insane to the general population is 1·25 to 1000. The mortality less in the prison than the common average.

APPENDIX III.

Mr. Sadler, of Stockport, says:—

I have taken the names of 280 prisoners from our Prison Register, all under the age of sixteen, the dates of their arrest, extending over a period of several years, and into whose circumstances inquiry had been, as far as possible, made, with the view of ascertaining the causes of such pre-

mature depravity, and of adopting measures to remedy so great an evil.

I will analyse more minutely ninety-eight of these cases, remarking that I might mention many others to prove that unnatural conduct on the part of parents towards their children, was the fertile source of crime, numbers being driven to the commission of it; thus becoming, in their infancy, inmates of gaols, and before reason could assume its sway being exiled as convicts, unpitied and friendless, to pass their lives amid chain-gangs in distant lands. And had time permitted me to do so, I am confident such information would not be unworthy the attention of the legislator, the philanthropist, and the divine.

Of ninety-eight prisoners :—

Of		Transported.	More than once in custody.
6	Left orphans in infancy . .	3	2
13	Left fatherless . . .	9	3
10	Left motherless . . .	3	6
7	Motherless, father drunken or otherwise profligate . .	2	1
13	Fatherless, mothers prostitutes or otherwise of bad character.	4	6
8	Fathers felons . . .	2	3
4	Mothers felons . . .	3	0
4	Both parents felons . .	1	3
22	Both parents profligate . .	8	3
10	Father drunken, nothing known against mother . . .	1	5
1	Mother drunkard, good father, only once in custody.		

What portion of the cases unexamined have received proper instruction is not for me to determine. I mention no profligacy which is not notorious, or has been brought under my cognizance as a public officer; but I may add, that of all the families connected with the 280 persons there are not more than a dozen about whom I feel confidence in their having discharged their duty towards their children, as imposed upon them by the ties of nature—the voice of reason and the requirements of morality and religion.

The majority are indifferent to any other duty than that of working for their maintenance, neglecting all moral restraint and family government, and especially are regardless

of the sabbath, neither attending any place of worship themselves nor sending their children to any Sunday-school, though such institutions abound, but suffer them to wander about the streets and lanes in crowds, engaged in sports, innocent perhaps at first, but leading to cheating, gambling, and petty felonies. The greatest danger, however, lies in the associations thus formed: they are led away to wakes and fairs, where one night's sojourn in a lodging-house may fix habits and furnish lessons not to be overcome by years of discipline. I assume that the following are the principal causes of juvenile delinquency:—

1st. Absence of proper instruction.
2nd. Bad example of parents.
3rd. Neglect of parents to provide sustenance.
4th. Absence of parental restraint, leading to evil associations.
5th. Parents being vagrants or pedlars—a very large class.
6th Being trained by parents to beg for their subsistence.
7th. Being left without home or shelter by death or desertion of parents.

As remedies for these evils, I consider the first and most certain to be instruction, moral and religious, and proper family government. This may be effected where parents are living, and can be made sensible of its importance. But how many are there of these young offenders who can never be brought within the range of beneficial preventative measures, so far as parental care is concerned? These unfortunately form a large class, as will appear from the foregoing list, and can be universally proved.

The second question suggested is: Can any beneficial alteration be made in the administration of the Poor-laws, so as to meet the condition of such as are not only left destitute of parents, but where neglect or gross profligacy can be proved, by compelling such parents to support them in the workhouse?

3rd. Can the police of the various towns be improved in its executive functions, so as to make its proceedings tend more effectually to the prevention of crime as well as detection, particularly as regards juveniles; for, unless this is carried out in the spirit, as well as intent of the act, all improvements in prison discipline, or provision made for the reception of young thieves, after short imprisonments, will

be totally unavailing as affecting diminution of crime, though such improvements will alleviate the condition of those sent. This I state most deliberately, as a practical man, and am prepared to prove the truth of my opinion.

4th. I am convinced that prison discipline, as at present administered, is totally unfit and inadequate to the condition of young offenders, so far as it has reference to their reformation; because I am not aware of any instance of amendment resulting from the treatment received in gaol, but of many where associations formed there have led young offenders into a regular course of crime.

5th. I believe the principal evil in gaols, as respects young offenders, arises from contamination, and that separation would be the most effectual remedy in prison discipline.

6th. I believe there are individual cases which might be reclaimed by the benefit of a temporary residence in such an asylum as the intended House of Refuge; but I do not think such instances are numerous, because the end might be better obtained by preliminary preventative measures, and also that the same, or quite as efficacious means, might be used in a prison, with alterations and improvements.

7th. I believe, that after a first conviction, or, in many cases, on a first conviction for felony, if the prisoner had been previously confined as a misdemeanant, the ends of justice and the interests of the young offender would be most effectually answered by banishment from the country for a term of years, the present treatment of transports being somewhat mitigated as regards juveniles.

8th. I believe that the expense necessary for making the alterations in gaols, and adopting other measures of prevention and improvement in prison discipline, would be more than saved; first, by a decrease in the number of prosecutions, apprehensions, and maintenance of prisoners in general; and, secondly, by an alteration in the criminal jurisprudence of the country, substituting, in some instances, summary commitment by the magistrates in petty sessions, for the present mode of sending to trial by a jury. This alteration having reference solely to juveniles brought up on a first charge, and even in this case much would depend on the condition of the party charged and the circumstances attending the commission of the felony; because I do not look upon the amount of property stolen as a criterion of the enormity of

the offence committed so much as the condition of the thief, the probable motives leading to, and the particular circumstances attending the commission of felony.

I believe such alterations might be made beneficial under judicious arrangement.

9th. I consider, in order that such alteration might not be abused, it would be necessary for the magistrate presiding, to be satisfied as to the prisoner's identity, and security taken against fraud or the assumption of false names.

10th. As to prisoners in general, I believe that the treatment of adults (felons especially) is not sufficiently rigorous, as a means of deterring such characters from the commission of crime; considering, as I do, that the reformation of adult criminals cannot be accomplished by any process of prison discipline, and viewing the punishments of imprisonment as necessary for the security of the public against offenders, I think that such discipline should be administered with a degree of severity which, if it fails to reform, should operate as a warning to criminals. I believe, of late, prison treatment of adults, has been much impaired as a means of deterring from crime, and I am of opinion that this decline may be attributed in part to mistaken notions of humanity, which, from an apprehension of sanctioning cruel treatment, has led to the other extreme of disarming a gaol of many of its terrors in the eyes of old offenders.

APPENDIX IV.

REFORMATION OF CRIMINALS.

Those who take an interest in the question of prison discipline, and the reformation of criminals, will find many things well deserving their attention in the following extracts from a report drawn up by the chaplain of the Knutsford House of Correction:—

The reformation of juvenile offenders is a subject which has of late excited much attention, and occupied the thoughts of many in this county, and I am sincerely rejoiced to find that the discussions to which it has given rise, are likely to produce two measures of great practical utility. First, an

improvement in our prison discipline, by the introduction of a more extended separation of prisoners; and, secondly, the establishment of a house of refuge for prisoners on their discharge, the latter of which it is confidently expected will prove the means of restoring many unhappy offenders to that station in society which they had forfeited by their crimes; and here let me assure those gentlemen who feel an interest in the success of this institution, that so long as I have the honour to hold my present office I shall labour most assiduously to prevail upon those who stand in need of such an asylum, to embrace the advantages it would offer to their acceptance; at the same time, I must not conceal from you the fact, that the great majority of the prisoners, especially the young, manifest a strong repugnance to enter any asylum whatever, after having served the period to which they had been sentenced by the court. Perhaps it would be practicable, after some time, to commit young persons convicted of their first offence to the House of Refuge, and not to the House of Correction.

Much good has been projected, and still much more remains *to be done.* It is, indeed, desirable to increase the rigours of imprisonment, in order to deter from the repetition of crime; and, also, to hold out encouragement, and afford assistance to those who aim at amendment in life. Yet, after all, this does not touch the root of that moral disorder, which infects our juvenile population. The judge and jury come too late; *their* function being to *punish*, not to *prevent crime;* and I should only be uttering a self-evident truism, were I to assert, that no repentance, however sincere, lasting, and genuine, can restore to a state of innocence. I trust you will see the bearing of these observations, when I state, that during the last three years, 385 persons under 17 years of age have been committed to this prison, namely, 253 from Macclesfield, 102 from Stockport, and 30 from Congleton; out of this number, no fewer than 145! are either orphans, illegitimate, or deserted by their unnatural parents. There is no class of society which possesses stronger claims upon our sympathy than the class to which these individuals belong. They are for the most part without a home, or relatives to look after them. Seldom or never have they experienced the comforts of their own fireside,—comforts which form so important an item in human happiness, and which operate as a powerful incentive to

good conduct. No mother's hand ministers to their wants; no father is near to guide, admonish, and protect them. In seasons of adversity, when hunted down by sickness and misfortune, they have no place to flee unto, and no man to care for their souls. Herded together in lodging-houses, the very hot-beds of immorality; ill-fed, badly clothed, and worse educated, they toil on from week to week for their daily bread, and find at the end, that almost all their earnings are absorbed by their miserable board and lodging. At an early period of the evening, their work is over, and they are left to their own resources, to wile away as best they can, the hours which intervene to bed time, without any means of mental culture, or any opportunity of enjoying innocent amusement. No wonder then, that they ramble idly, and without purpose, through the streets, or are induced to frequent concert rooms, public houses, or other even worse places of resort, where they soon contract a relish for depraved company. After many a struggle, perchance, they fall before the assaults of temptation, and commence a career of open and avowed profligacy. Far be it from me to attempt to justify such wickedness, but it ought to be remembered, that human nature is frail, and temptation is often too strong, even for those who are surrounded by circumstances most favourable to virtue. What's done, we all may partly guess, but who can tell what is resisted?

The establishment of a well-regulated boarding-house in connection with each factory, in the populous manufacturing towns, would mitigate to a considerable extent the evils to which I have alluded. A suitable house might easily be provided, and a respectable couple found to preside over it, qualified by age, experience, and the possession of humane dispositions, to supply the place of parents to deserted children. The inmates would be, of course, required to pay a reasonable sum for their maintenance. A certain portion of their wages might be set apart for the purchase of clothing, and other necessary articles, and the surplus, if any, invested in savings banks for their use. A small reward might be given to those who distinguished themselves by propriety of conduct at home, or by diligence, and regularity, and attention to their work. It would be the duty of the master and matron to mould them into habits of order, economy, cleanliness, and honesty. Evening classes for reading and writing, music and singing, ought to be

formed, a library established, and provision made for healthy exercise, and animating recreation in the open air. The ministers of religion would, I am persuaded, most cordially unite in the promotion of these objects, and deem it a privilege to superintend the education and morals of the inmates. By such a course of training many would be saved from the temptations to which they are now helplessly exposed, and would grow up and continue, useful members of society, and good Christians.

This is a faint outline of a scheme, in which we possess all the elements of success; combining labour with recreation, the pleasures of home with the advantages of education. For my part, I candidly confess, that I have more faith in habits than homilies; in practice than preaching; and, therefore, do I earnestly wish to see virtuous habits formed, exercised, and strengthened; not in prisons or penitentiaries, but in the discharge of the duties of our "work-day world."

I am perfectly aware that the court, as a court, cannot take cognizance of this recommendation. I, however, make this report, with a view to induce some influential magistrates in their private capacity, to bring this subject before the masters and manufacturers of Macclesfield, Stockport, and Congleton; for without the hearty co-operation of the employers, no good can possibly be achieved. Although I have not the pleasure of an acquaintance with any of the manufacturers of Cheshire, yet, if I may judge of them by the gentlemen of the same class, whom it is my happiness to know in the next county, I can with the utmost confidence rely upon their humanity, kindness, and judicious liberality. If the masters would keep a friendly watch over those children who have lost their natural protectors; if they would make themselves acquainted with their domestic circumstances, and expend a little money in improving their moral and social condition, they would sensibly diminish the amount of crime, and thereby confer a signal benefit on the county; nor would their own interests suffer by thus acting up to their responsibilities, because their commercial prosperity is closely interwoven with the welfare of the workpeople.

Knutsford House of Correction, April 6th, 1846.

No. V.

YOUTHFUL CRIMINALS AT LIVERPOOL.

The following statements are taken from a petition to the legislature, recently adopted by the Common Council of Liverpool:—

The number of committals made by your petitioners during the last seven years, for offences within their jurisdiction, is fifty-one thousand four hundred and thirty-four. That of this number 31,822 were males, and 19,612 were females. That 5583 of them were under the age of 17 years, and the remainder were above the age of 17 years. That of this number 25,988 persons were once committed, 8056 were twice committed, 4173 were three times committed, 2847 were four times committed, and that 10,374 were committed five times and upwards.

That your petitioners know that many of these last prisoners were committed much more frequently than five times, though your petitioners have not the means of stating with accuracy the precise number of times in which each prisoner has been committed beyond five times, except in cases hereinafter mentioned. That for some time the attention of your petitioners has been forcibly drawn to the state of the younger portion of the criminal population, and recently your petitioners have been requested to join in petitions to your honourable house, praying for the establishment of houses of occupation for persons discharged from criminal prisons.

That in order to enable your honourable house to form a judgment of the cost of the present system, your petitioners beg to record the actual cost attending fourteen cases of Juvenile delinquents who have from time to time been committed to the prison of this borough. The cases referred to were fairly selected in 1842, from the mass of the juvenile prisoners in the prison, by one of your petitioners who was at that time endeavouring to ascertain the charge incurred by the treatment of juvenile offenders in prison, in contrast with those in reformatory institutions. That the costs of prosecution in the estimate relating to

these fourteen cases, are much less than the usual costs, because the Corporation of Liverpool are the public prosecutors, and all expenses are most economically conducted.

That your petitioners trust your honourable house will find in the importance of the subject an apology for the length of this petition, and for the details in the possession of which your petitioners deem it right to put the members of your honourable house. That for the greater convenience your petitioners refer to the cases by a numeral 1 to 14, prefixed to each.

That No. 1. Eighteen years old, can neither read nor write. First committed, 8th January, 1835; last committal, 22nd February, 1841. Committed sixteen times; discharged six. Last sentence, twelve months' imprisonment.—No. 2. Now sixteen years old; can read imperfectly, cannot write. First committed, 15th August, 1838; last committal, 31st January, 1842. Committed twelve times; discharged once. Last sentence, ten years' transportation.—No. 3. Twelve years old; can neither read nor write. First committed, 3rd June, 1837; last committed, 13th January, 1842. Committed ten times; discharged ten. Last sentence, three months' imprisonment. —No. 4. Twelve years old, can neither read nor write, First committed, 26th September, 1838; last committed. 31st January, 1842. Committed nine times: discharged seven. Last sentence, ten years' transportation.—No. 5. Twelve years old; can neither read nor write. First committed, 8th August, 1839; last committal, 16th September, 1841. Committed eight times; discharged five. Last sentence, three months' imprisonment.—No. 6. Ten years old; can neither read nor write. First committed, 21st December, 1837; last committal, 5th January, 1842. Committed eleven times; discharged three. Last sentence, seven years' transportation.—No. 7. Fourteen years' old; can neither read nor write. First committed, 9th January, 1838; last committal, 8th March, 1842. Committed nineteen times; discharged four. Last sentence, three months' imprisonment.—No. 8. Thirteen years old; can neither read nor write. First committed, 10th February, 1838; last committal 22nd February, 1842. Committed sixteen times; discharged five. Last sentence, three months' imprisonment.—No. 9. Fourteen

years old; can neither read nor write. First committed, 17th June, 1839; last committal, 20th October, 1841. Committed seven times; discharged eight. Last sentence, three months' imprisonment.—No. 10. Nine years old; can neither read nor write. First committed, 30th September, 1839; last committal, 20th October, 1841. Committed four times; discharged twelve. Last sentence, 25th October, 1841, seven years' transportation.—No. 11. Twelve years old; can neither read nor write. First committed, 16th October, 1838; last committal, 18th August, 1841. Committed seven times; discharged four. Last sentence, fourteen days' imprisonment.—No. 12. Twelve years old; can neither read nor write. First committal, 2nd January, 1840; last, 17th December, 1841. Committed five times; discharged six. Last sentence, three months' imprisonment.—No. 13. Thirteen years old; can neither read nor write. First committal, 19th September, 1838; last committal, 30th March, 1841. Committed five times; discharged five. Last sentence, three months' imprisonment.—No. 14. Thirteen years old; can neither read nor write. First committal, 30th August, 1839; last committal, 2nd February, 1842. Committed six times; discharged six. Last sentence, three months' imprisonment.

That the costs of apprehension, maintenance, prosecution and punishment of No. 1 was £129. 5*s* 6½*d*, of No. 2, £71. 2*s* 10½*d*; of No. 3, £74. 1*s* 10½*d*; of No. 4, £71. 13*s* 1*d*; of No. 5, £4. 9*s* 3*d*; of No. 6, £64. 6*s* 6½*d*; of No. 7, £99. 2*s* 5½*d*; of No. 8, £72. 1*s* 4½*d*; of No. 9, £52. 9*s* 7½*d*; of No. 10, £64. 18*s* 0½*d*; of No. 11, £28. 10*s* 4½*d*; of No. 12, £39. 8*s* 10½*d*; of No. 13, £26. 10*s* 10*d*; of No. 14, £47. 7*s* 7½*d*; and thus these offenders cost the public £889. 1*s*.

That, for the more full development of the moral and financial results of the present system of punishing juvenile offenders, your petitioners have traced, as far as it can be ascertained, the subsequent career of the above-mentioned fourteen prisoners.

That, at the time of the return, four of them, namely, 2, 4, 6, and 10, were under sentence of transportation; that No. 1 died in prison; that No. 3, after being again once imprisoned, was transported; that No. 5, after two several additional periods of imprisonment, was also trans-

ported; that No. 7, after six several additional periods of imprisonment, was also transported; that No. 8, after six several periods of imprisonment, was also transported; that No. 9, after one imprisonment, was also transported; that No. 11, after sixteen several additional periods of imprisonment, is again in custody for trial; and that No. 12 has been imprisoned seven times since the return, but is now out of gaol, a prostitute; that No. 13 has not been heard of in Liverpool since the date of the last return, and that No. 14 has been transported, after an additional period of imprisonment.

That it thus appears that ten out of the fourteen children have been transported; that one is dead; that one is now in custody; that one is still among the criminal population, and of one only is there hope of reformation, and of this last-mentioned nothing is known. That the costs of the various apprehensions, detention, and imprisonment of these offenders will have to be added to the costs already given, and, in addition, the cost of the final transportation of the ten persons must also be added. That none of these fourteen offenders could write, and only one of them could read, and that imperfectly.

That your petitioners do not desire to enter into a statement of their opinions as to the causes of crime further than to observe, that to want and ignorance much of it may undoubtedly be attributed. Your petitioners, upon this ground, therefore, as well as upon other considerations, respectfully suggest that it is the duty of the legislature to provide, by a well-considered system of national education, for the redemption of a vast portion of the children of this country, particularly those in large towns, from ignorance, and its almost inseparable companion, vice.

No. VI.

From the Chester Chronicle, May 15, 1846.

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN LIVERPOOL.

Mr. E. R. Highton, the Governor of the Liverpool Borough Prison, has just drawn up a very curious account

of juvenile delinquency in this town, with a view of enabling the borough magistrates to judge whether it is desirable to join in urging the formation of national asylums for the reformation of youthful delinquents, as recommended by the city of London's solicitor, in a report recently laid before the magistrates. In this statement, Mr. Highton gives a particular account of the domestic circumstances of the sixty-six juvenile delinquents who were in the Borough Prison of Liverpool at the time when the inquiry was made. The following is a summary of the facts and results :—

On inquiry it was found that forty-eight of the juvenile delinquents who were in jail when this inquiry was made had fixed homes, whilst eighteen lived in lodging-houses of the worst description. Of the forty-eight juvenile offenders whose homes were visited, it was found that there were only three who had not parents, and who might therefore be supposed to have been driven to crime by the want of parental advice and support; and that of those who were not living at home there were only four who had no parents. In the respect the result of Mr. Highton's investigation differs very greatly from that of the gentlemen who had been making a similar inquiry in Knutsford Gaol. Of them it was found that there are no less than 140 out of about 400 who are either orphans or illegitimates. It would be very desirable that the inquiries commenced in Liverpool should be carried out, on the same plan, to a much greater extent, to ascertain, among other things, whether any considerable portion of juvenile delinquency is produced by the cause which seems to have had so much influence amongst the boys confined at Knutsford. Should that be found to be the case generally, national asylums, such as those recommended by the city solicitor, would be of the greatest use to this class of offenders.

Of the forty-eight juvenile delinquents whose homes were visited by Mr. Highton, it was found, " that fifteen " appeared to have decidedly comfortable homes and " decent parents; the homes of five appeared plentiful " and efficient, but wanting in domestic management; " seven had plentiful and sufficient homes, but their " parents, one or both, were more or less given to drink ;

" four (in each case the children of widows) had decent " but barely sufficient homes; four had barely sufficient " homes, which might be traced to parental drunkenness; " seven had each one parent of bad character, two of " them (girls) lived with their mother, who kept a brothel; " and three had parents who followed desultory modes of " occupations, unfavourable to morals. The average in- " come of the parents amounted to rather more than 20s. " The parents of eight of the prisoners had been in prison; " four (of whom one had two children in gaol) for offences " of a felonious nature, and three for assaults or drunken- " ness. Of these eight juveniles, three had had brothers " or sisters in the gaol, or transported. Eight other juve- " niles had also had brothers or sisters in the gaol, making " in all eleven prisoners whose brothers or sisters had been " in gaol."

Not one of all these offenders appeared to have been driven to theft by destitution.

Of the forty-eight delinquents whose houses were visited, seven had been in prison once; thirteen, twice; seven, thrice; seven, four times; five, five times; two, six times; three seven times; two, eight times, and two, not less than ten times. Of those who had not fixed homes, three had been in prison once; five, twice; three, four times; three, five times; three, six times, and one nine times. Of the whole sixty-six prisoners, fifty-three were males, and thirteen females. The age of the males were as follows:—one, nine years; one, ten years; three, eleven years; five, twelve years; four, thirteen years; nine, fourteen years; eleven, fifteen years; sixteen, sixteen years, and three seventeen years. Of the females:—two were eleven years; one, twelve years; one, thirteen years; one, fourteen years; two, fifteen years; two, sixteen years, and four seventeen years. So that of these sixty-six juvenile offenders, forty-eight were of the age of fourteen years and upwards, and only two under eleven.

With regard to the education of these children, it appeared that twenty-nine boys and six girls had attended day schools, whilst six boys and seven girls did not appear to have attended any day schools; some of the girls however had attended Sunday schools. In no instance do any of these children appear to have attended infant

schools, and to want of attention in early childhood, Mr. Highton is disposed to attribute the bad propensities of many of the children.

The domestic relations of the whole sixty-six prisoners were as follows:—twenty-six had both parents living; seven had both parents dead; thirteen had only mothers living; four had only fathers; six had step-mothers, and ten had step-fathers.

The following are the general inferences which Mr. Highton is disposed to draw from the above facts:—

"A few general inferences, however, in addition to those already suggested, appear to be well established.

1st. That a very small portion of juvenile crime is caused by actual destitution.

2nd. That the children of criminal parents form a very small number of the juveniles who come into prison.

3rd. That juvenile crime does not originate in particular localities, and that those districts which are generally supposed to be its sources, are in fact, but the receptacles of the juvenile delinquency, which flows in too continuous streams from the crowded courts and streets in all quarters of the town, and converges there. The presumption, and the fact, may be further reconciled, when it is remembered, that these disreputable districts are in general inhabited by the classes who pursue desultory and not very reputable modes of employment.

4th. That though, in some cases, the irregular habits of the parents had, no doubt, contributed to cause the criminality of their children, and though many cases appeared to indicate a necessity for stricter attention to early training and discipline, yet, as there were only eight cases where the brothers or sisters of the prisoners had been in gaol, out of forty-three families visited, comprising 190 children who had been subjected generally to the same social influences and domestic discipline as the prisoners, and from other facts previously adverted to, it may fairly be presumed that external circumstances are not most influential in causing juvenile delinquency.

Still external circumstances, doubtless, exert a potent influence upon character and conduct, and of all these influences, and especially upon youth, that of home is certainly paramount, whether for good or for evil, and, therefore, it would appear that any measures which would en-

force and aid in maintaining the most effective parental management and supervision, would be most generally beneficial, whatever other means may be adopted to provide for special cases, or for the suppression of juvenile delinquency by the direct aid of institutions. The economical and social reasons which may be urged for or against such institutions, it is not my duty to discuss. Whether it would be advantageous to the future character of the lower classes, to train up large numbers in constant dependence upon public support—whether such institutions for criminals might not give occasion for comparisons unfavourable as to physical condition and social prospects to the honest and industrious—whether they would or would not tend to weaken the sense of parental responsibility, and to confuse the popular idea of the social consequences of virtue and vice—whether, if such institutions be thought necessary, it would be desirable to make criminality a condition of access, or possible to provide suitable situations for their numerous inmates on their discharge, with many other considerations which such a project naturally suggests, are questions for the deliberation of those whose position gives the means of commanding more extensive information, and the right to express a more influential opinion upon the subject."—*Liverpool Times.*

No. VII.

City of London Recorder.

CENTRAL CRIMINAL COURT—MAY 19, 1846.

In the course of the day the grand jury came into court with the remainder of the bills.

The Foreman, addressing his Lordship, said he was requested by his brother jurymen to state that they were aware they had been engaged a longer time than usual at the present session; but they thought it right to say that they had devoted no more time to the consideration of each case than was necessary to afford to each party accused that right which the constitution gave him, of not being put upon his trial without twelve men expressing

their opinion, upon their oaths, that there was ground for such a course being taken; and he begged to state, that no bill had been returned except with the consent of twelve of their body. The foreman went on to say, that the grand jury had felt great difficulty in disposing of the cases of juvenile offenders: in many cases the parties were unwilling to prosecute them, although the evidence was conclusive; and the grand jury were placed in the position of violating the solemn obligation they were under, by the oath they had taken, or else to send such offenders for trial before the petty jury. They had, however, in such cases, felt it their duty to act upon the evidence, although it was repugnant to their moral feelings. He then handed the following presentment to the court:—

"The grand jury respectfully present, at the close of their duties, the solemn conviction forced on them by their recent investigation, that there is something fundamentally defective in legislation, both as it regards the decrease of crime and the reclamation of criminals. The instances of a second conviction coming before them have been numerous, and it would appear to them as though our jurisprudence had it in view, that a citizen once charged with guilt should never cease to be a criminal—beggared by the unnecessarily heavy expenses of his defence, and subjected, during his confinement, to association with characters the most depraved, and forced on the world, at the close of his confinement, without money or repute, the accused is made for the rest of life a criminal by profession. In the case of the young this is still more deplorable, and is complicated with grievances which the public share. The grand jury, among many similar instances, have had before them the case of Thomas Miller, No. 34, Middlesex, a child of eight years of age, for stealing lead to the value of ——, with a former conviction; and the case of two boys, of the age of sixteen, No. 119, Middlesex, for stealing to the value of one shilling, with a former conviction against one of them for stealing to the value of sixpence. The irrationality of moving the complicated and costly machinery of law for the legal punishment (and for such acts) of children, neglected and untaught, forcibly impressed itself on the minds of the grand jury; and while expressing their surprise and regret, that the magistrates of police courts cannot make similar cases to these matters

of summary jurisdiction, they would earnestly invite attention to the necessity of some general measure for removing children charged with such trivial offences, after their release, from the depraving circumstances that must insure their repeated and continued appearance in our law courts in the character of criminals. The grand jury believe it is not out of the sphere of their duties to suggest the importance of doing something which, by diffusing information, and improving the reasoning power of our poorer population, may remove from our calendar numerous crimes which now owe their origin solely to ignorance; and they feel convinced, while an improved agency of this kind, using public means rather for the prevention than the detection and punishment of crime, merits support both as humane and efficient, it shall as strongly appeal to public consideration on the ground of a judicious and great economy."

"The Recorder said he collected from the grand jury that they had concluded their labours, and that in the course of those labours they had felt a repugnance at carrying out the law in certain cases; but that notwithstanding this private feeling, they had acted upon the evidence and without reference to their private feelings. It appeared to him that the grand jury had performed their duty with great propriety, and the country was much indebted to them for their services. As to the topics that were referred to by the grand jury in their presentment, he was not prepared to apply his attention to such topics at this moment, or aware that they would have been introduced to his attention; but if he had been, it would probably not be a convenient course for the court to enter into a discussion upon those subjects which would more properly form the subject of consideration by the Legislature. With regard, however, to that portion of the observations of the grand jury, in reference to the jurisdiction of the magistrates in the police courts, he could state that in the present condition of the law, where a case of felony was made out, it gave them no discretion as to the course they should adopt, and they were bound to commit the accused party for trial. That the powers of the magistrates were restricted in this respect might be a matter of regret, but as the law at present stood, they could adopt no other course than to commit the parties for trial." His lordship concluded by

again thanking the grand jury for the great care and attention they had bestowed upon the cases brought before them.

The grand jury then retired.

No. VIII.

MILBANK PRISON.

In reply to Sir P. Laurie's remarks upon this prison, those who think it worth while to satisfy themselves by a personal inquiry into the truth of them, will find—

1st. That ever since August, 1843, when the prison was reorganized, the health of its inmates has been *so good*, as far to exceed the ordinary averages of any equal number elsewhere.

2nd. That there has been *no case of insanity* originating within the prison among the males, and, with one *doubtful exception*, among the females.

3rd. That the average number of deaths has been unusually low.

It must be borne in mind, that this prison is a depot for transports from all parts of the world, who must all be admitted, in however advanced stages of diseases, except only such as are infectious and actual insanity. Previous insanity does not furnish a reason for rejecting them, nor yet their having pleaded insanity on their trial. There are 80 children under 14 years old consigned to transportation by County and Borough Sessions.

THE END.

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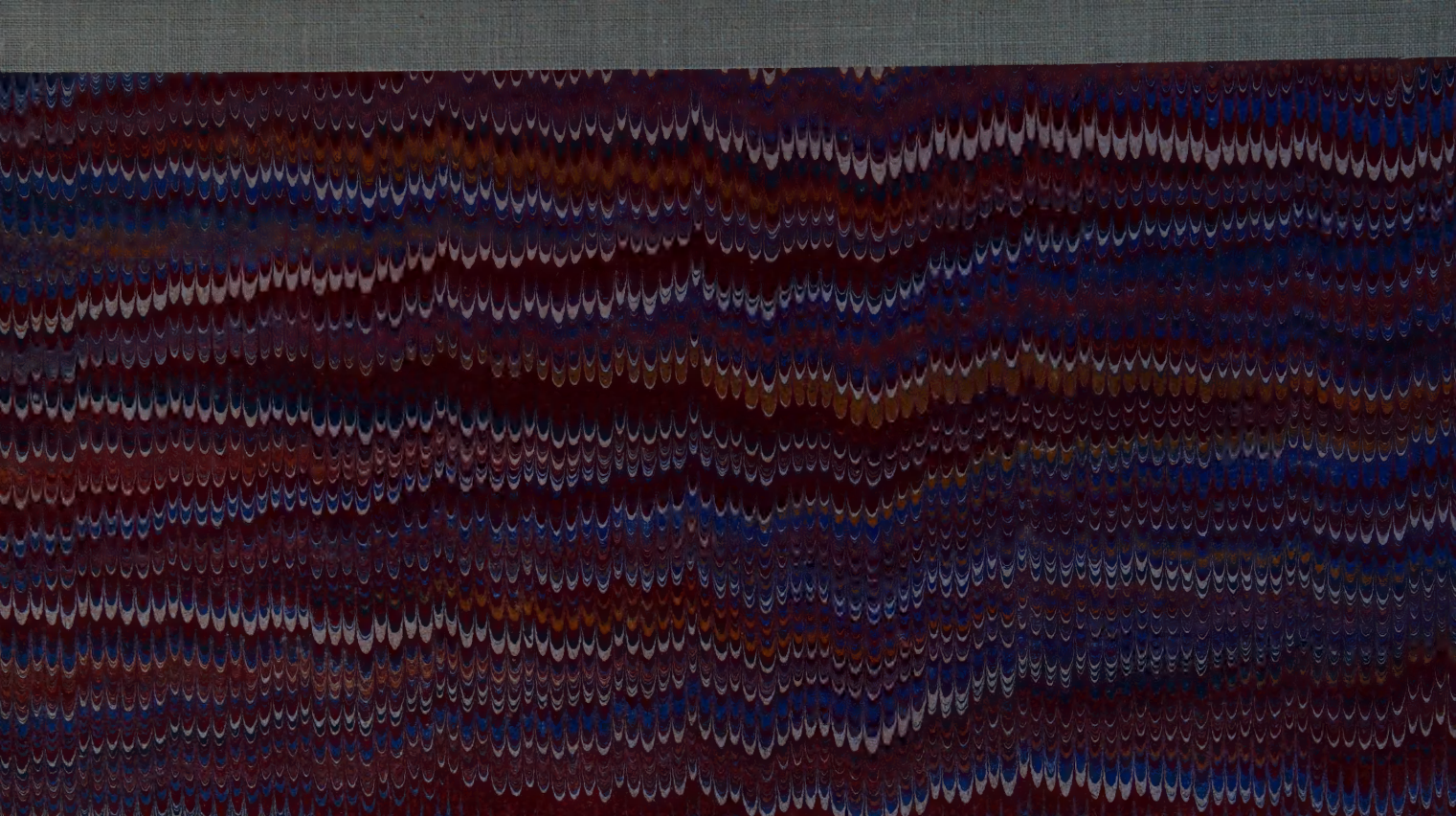

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[Religious and moral education in England; a
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